

*Citation for published version:*

Purdekova, A 2011 'Rwanda's Ingando Camps: Liminality and the Reproduction of Power' Oxford Refugee Studies Centre Working Paper Series, no. 80, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, Oxford.  
<<https://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications/rwanda2019s-ingando-camps-liminality-and-the-reproduction-of-power>>

*Publication date:*  
2011

*Document Version*  
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication](#)

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WORKING PAPER SERIES NO. 80

Rwanda's *Ingando* camps  
Liminality and the reproduction of power

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September 2011

Refugee Studies Centre  
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University of Oxford

Working Paper Series

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## Glossary

<i>abakangurambaga</i>	'those who wake up the masses'/ local 'promoters'
<i>abami</i>	kings (sing. umwami)
<i>abanyabwenge</i>	intellectuals
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
<i>duvaye</i>	leader
FAR	Rwandan Armed Forces ('Forces Armées du Rwanda'); Rwandan military of regime prior to RPF takeover in 1994
FRD	Rwandan Defense Forces ('Forces Rwandaises de Défense') ; current Rwandan military force
FDLR	Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda ('Forces Democratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda'); Rwandan rebel group opposed to current regime
<i>gacaca</i>	'popular'/community courts (justice 'on the grass')
GNU	Government of National Unity
<i>icyivugo</i>	praise-poem
<i>igitaramo</i>	evening gathering of song and dance (also known as <i>utemaduni</i> )
IJR	Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
IRDP	Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace
<i>Itorero/itorero ry'Igihugu</i>	traditional 'schools'/'advanced' <i>ingando</i>
<i>kos</i>	informal appellation for the <i>ingando</i> participants
Mai Mai	self-defense militias operating in eastern DRC
MIGEPROF	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MINALOC	Rwandan Ministry of Local Government, Community Development and Social Affairs
NRM	National Resistance Movement; dominant political party in Uganda
NUR	National University of Rwanda; based in Butare
NURC	National Unity and Reconciliation Commission
PRI	Penal Reform International

RANU	Rwanda Alliance for National Unity; Uganda-based Rwandan rebels changed its name to 'RPF' in advance of 1994 civil war
RCD Goma	Rally for Congolese Democracy ('Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie'); Congolese rebel group backed by Rwanda
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front ('Front patriotique rwandais'); dominant political party in Rwanda
Rwandanicity	a concept in the nation-building discourse—the specific nature of 'being Rwandan'
Rwandanness	a concept in the nation-building discourse—identifying first and foremost as Rwandan and the loyalties and the attachments that come with it
TIG	<i>Travaux d'Intérêts Généraux</i> /Community Service
TIGistes	participants of TIG
<i>ubudehe</i>	'mutual assistance' program at cell level
<i>ubusabane</i>	a community 'get together' festival
<i>ubutwari</i>	heroes
<i>umuganda</i>	community works (one Saturday each month)
<i>umwiherero</i>	a retreat for Rwandan leaders where they reflect on strategy
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
<i>utemaduni</i>	see <i>igitaramo</i>
Vision 2020	key government document outlining the mid-term vision for the country
WHO	World Health Organisation

## 1 Introduction

In the aftermath of the 1994 Rwandan genocide, reconciliation and the building of a unified nation have become key challenges for the new Rwandan political elite. To this end, over almost two decades, the government has introduced a variety of supposedly 'traditional,' 'local' and 'participatory' activities ranging from the well-studied *gacaca* courts ('justice on the grass') (see e.g., Clark 2010, Ingelaere 2009, Rettig 2008, Oomen 2006) to very little known activities such as *ingando* camps, *itorero* schools, *ubudehe* 'mutual assistance' schemes, *ubusabane* 'get-together' festivals, *abakangurambaga* or local 'promoters,' among many others.

Sparse academic analysis of most of these activities leaves interested observers with little more than the official government depictions, which draw on terms that are popular with the development community and which evoke enthusiastically notions such as 'participation' and 'voice,' 'authenticity' and 'adaptation to the local.' Not only are these descriptions and the categories of meaning they evoke in need of critical scrutiny, so is the important de-politicising effect that they exert. Through the deployment of certain forms of language and non-deployment of others in activities' 'characterisation,' these are separated discursively from the political realm. This dynamic is perhaps manifested most clearly in the resurgence and rather uncritical acceptance of the language of 'traditionality' in the sphere of reconciliation.

There has been a strong move towards the 'local embedding' of transitional justice. Recourse to 'traditional' solutions or 'hybridised' processes (combining local and Western approaches) became popular in conflict-affected countries such as Sierra Leone, Rwanda and Uganda as they represented an antidote to the universalisms of development. In Rwanda, a profusion of such activities has sprung up in the last ten

years, all laying claim to Rwandan tradition. *Itorero* are ‘traditional schools.’ *Umuganda* is a ‘traditional practice of collective work’ (MINALOC 2006: 61).<sup>1</sup> The reaching to the past for inspiration arises from the ‘tiredness with these Western approaches.’<sup>2</sup>

But while it is true that ‘all is made in Rwanda’,<sup>3</sup> that these are ‘home-grown’ ideas, we cannot forget that what goes on is a skilful government-led reinvention, and often plain experimentation rather than a recovery of activities from the precolonial past or a reapplication of ‘classical approaches.’ What used to be localised activities of communal mutuality (*umuganda*), conflict resolution (*gacaca*) or education (*itorero*) are now government tools of large-scale social transformation. Some activities seem to be connected only tenuously to the claimed precedent (for example, *ingando*).

Locally-sourced activities adapted to specific and contemporary needs are certainly what is required. However, we should carefully analyse particular deployments of the language of ‘traditionality’ in every specific case. ‘Traditionality’ can be imposed on communities from above. The very labelling of something as ‘traditional’ also performs (whether intentional or unintentional but still tangible) political work. The main outcomes of the ‘traditionality’ discourse are the conferral of ‘authenticity’ and subsequent legitimisation — activities hold unvoiced ‘traditional authority.’ The tyranny of the ‘authentic’ lies in its tautological claim on the person. It pre-emptively breaks protest because, after all, you have to be ‘it’ as this thing is you. The traditionality of activities also depoliticises them, increasing the sphere of customary as arbitrary (Mamdani 1996). Though Mamdani discussed the arbitrariness of customary political authority under colonial rule (‘centralised and de-centralised despotism’), the insights into the workings of ‘spheres-of-the-customary’ are helpful for post-conflict African politics and beyond personal authority. The customary as a boundary is asserted, the contents within it are then sanctioned by the label. In this manner, contours or ‘pockets’ of the arbitrary are created within which ‘unfreedoms’, political manipulation or even economic exploitation can pass unnamed. As Phillip Verwimp noted in his work on pre-genocide Rwandan peasantry (2000: 345) “it is common practice for Habyarimana, as for other dictators, to use *cultural arguments* to justify economic exploitation. Working for the collective good, as *Umuganda* was called, is a prime example of this” [emphasis added].

In the realm of ‘traditionality,’ culture and politics are separated discursively. An impact assessment of National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC), carried out by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR), suggests that “ordinary people are more in contact with cultural institutions than political ones” (2005: 44). This is true, but not because the ‘apolitical’ sphere in fact exists or because ‘ordinary’ people are naturally part of a cultural, non-political world, but largely because they are relegated to such space.

Such a closer look at the functioning of the discourse of ‘traditionality’ should explain why we need to approach so-called ‘unity and reconciliation’ activities in Rwanda as *a priori* ‘unknown’ objects, estranging ourselves from any sense of familiarity and asking ‘*What is in a name?*’ Only through observation and questioning and approaching of the

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<sup>1</sup> *Umuganda* is ‘the tradition of work on public projects,’ *ubudehe* ‘the tradition of mutual assistance,’ *gacaca* ‘the tradition of communal resolution of disputes,’ *umusanzu* ‘the tradition of support for the needy and contribution to the achievement of a common goal’ (MINALOC 2007: 10).

<sup>2</sup> Informal discussion with NURC’s Director of Civic Education, 11 November 2008.

<sup>3</sup> See for example review of Kagame’s Closing Speech at the 7<sup>th</sup> National Dialogue (Kagire for NTK, 8 February 2010). In *Kinyarwanda*, he said ‘Gacaca, Ubudehe, Umuganda, Ubumwe n’Ubwiyunge, *byose ni made in Rwanda* [all of these are ‘made in Rwanda’]. The word ‘home-grown’ though is used quite often to describe unity and reconciliation activities.

activity from different angles can we arrive at an understanding of not only the functionality of official depictions but also the gaps that exist between these and what actually happens on the ground. It is through this type of analysis that the wider political forces/interests that shape objects and their representations will become apparent, and it is through such analysis of specific activities (here, one activity) that the wider social dynamics in post-genocide Rwanda take their shape. It is also this strategy that allows us to understand what type of 'nation' and 'unity' is indeed being built in Rwanda. The activity that will be studied here should be understood as a 'node' — as a 'window' into wider socio-political dynamics.

The present paper could have focused on a number of the recently-introduced 'unity and reconciliation' activities since all but *gacaca* have received almost no scholarly attention. *Ingando* camps, however, should interest us for many reasons, many of which will become apparent throughout the analysis below. Just as with the other activities, *ingando* offers insights into the performative aspect of nation-building — the ways in which a nation/unity is being 'enacted,' what type(s) of 'unities' are thus actually being built in Rwanda and how they are being built (official versions versus those that arise from enactment), and what other (non-stated) objectives might be served in the name of 'nation-building.' But unlike other activities, the camps provide a unique insight into the way in which spatial and symbolic aspects, especially 'liminality' (a camp as a transient and transitional space), are being used to reproduce power (a structural set of relations).

In what follows, I first try to understand both the 'what' of *ingando* (*What is it all about?*) and the effects that the camps have — both the claimed effects (i.e. the 'expected' outcomes such as 'reconciliation', 'unity,' 'nation-building') and the actual effects, whatever these might be. It is through such analysis that *ingando* reappears as a historically-embedded and yet a profoundly post-genocide government tool of social engineering whose effects range far beyond what we are led to believe by the camps' official descriptions.

The analysis that follows draws on seven months of fieldwork in Rwanda conducted between March 2008 and April 2009. During this time, I collected a rich set of data, studying *ingando* through multiple avenues: formal interviews and informal discussions, visits to camps and primary and secondary materials. Almost all of the 200-plus formal and informal interactions have involved a discussion of *ingando*, whether it was a central discussion point or one of many. I have spoken to past and present *ingando* organisers, participants of different backgrounds (age, education, region, ethnicity, occupation, language), as well as diverse people in government, NGO, and other sectors. The responses (gathered through semi-structured interviews and questionnaires) of more than 110 participants from three types of *ingando* (university entrants; ex-combatants and released prisoners) have been an especially rich source of information, as have been the *ingando* visits.

Altogether, I have been able to visit *ingando* camps eight times and managed to visit six different types of *ingando*. NURC organised only the 'Nkumba *ingando*' for university entrants at lake Ruhondo in the North, which I visited three times, sitting through fourteen hours of class and participating in the closing graduation ceremony. Besides student *ingando*, I was able to visit four other state-organised camps (for released prisoners, street children, youth ex-combatants and adult ex-combatants) and one non-state-organised *ingando* (for Adventist youth).



## 2 *Ingando*: Camping in the service of nation-building?

Since shortly after the genocide, hundreds of Rwandans at a time have been gathered at remote camps where they have stayed for weeks or months, isolated from their communities and families, learning about the history of Rwanda and the 'work of the government,' singing and dancing, doing community work and military exercises together. In the tense atmosphere of the late 1990s, when distrust ran high and social relations were severely strained, and when hundreds of thousands returned to Rwanda from various countries in the diaspora (many seeing the country for the first time), the new government proposed *ingando* camps as a key tool in 'nation-building.'

But what exactly is *ingando*? The sparse critical analysis that has appeared (Mgbako 2005) labels *ingando* in broad strokes as brainwashing or re-education. Indeed, *ingando* is about re-education as it is about governmentality and social re-engineering. *Ingando* is in fact a concentrated interpretive space where wider social dynamics converge. Hence rather than dismissing *ingando* through simplistic, ideological language or unquestioningly accepting programmatic descriptions of the government, the analysis below tries to approach these retreats as worthy of an in-depth study.

To make something as transient as the *ingando* camps a centrepiece of a study is not incidental. It aims to underline the importance of transitory experiences and the 'enaction' of our social world that is fundamentally fleeting, requiring constant re-creation through staging of thought through speaking, acting and feeling. Movement is key to understanding Rwanda, perhaps more than elsewhere, its recent history being marked by a returnee capture of power and mass movements resulting in transitory and transnational experiences and identities. *Ingando* also allows us to constitute nation-building both as deeply grounded (spatial, local, emplaced) and constructed (continuously belaboured and enacted). It shows that rites of passage and acts of transition to static, delimited and territorially-based imagined communities are, as their name suggests, attempted through physical, symbolic and ideational *movement*.

Despite being a relevant and a revelatory space, *ingando* or, more broadly, encamped experience in the service of nation-building, has not received almost any academic attention. Yet the camps remain potentially key from the viewpoint of governmentality: *ingando* as a space of (intended) intensified transformation connects to the massive social re-engineering exercise underway in post-genocide Rwanda. The fact that National Unity and Reconciliation Commission's (NURC) main department is one of 'Civic Education' only further highlights that, even in the sphere of unity and reconciliation, the primary task is to 'shape' the citizen and his or her mentality. Furthermore, it is this department that organises *ingando* and among the Commission's activities (*ibikorwa*) in general, it is highlighted as the 'flagship activity.' Due to all the above reasons, it is the contention of the present study that *ingando*'s spatial, symbolic and performative nature, in addition to specific texts being disseminated, make it an example *par excellence* of the wholesale transformation attempted by the Rwandan government.

The 'dynamics of gaps' between official descriptions and what unfolds on the ground is perhaps nowhere greater than in the case of *ingando*. For one, the descriptions are vague and multiple and the research scant, so it is hard to make sense of something variably referred to as 'solidarity camps,' 're-education camps,' 'civic education camps,' 'political awareness camps,' 'reorientation camps' or 'reintegration courses.' One NGO even described *ingando* as '*camps de vacance*' (vacation camps). Various rumours constitute *ingando* either as 'military training,' 'making everyone Tutsi,' or a 'boring



succession of lessons.’ Interpenetration of themes, on the other hand, allows different Rwandan organisations and ministries to put the camps into their logical matrices (‘logframes’), highlighting different aspects of *ingando*, claiming they foster ‘private sector development’ or aid in ‘HIV/AIDS education.’

Notably, *ingando* grapples with a powerful contradiction. Highlighted as building unity and reconciliation among Rwandans,<sup>4</sup> certain *ingando* are run like military camps and comprise military training. This fact, however, is not acknowledged in any official descriptions. *Ingando* is without doubt a sensitive topic — for the government but especially for the donors. As a result, anyone trying to ‘interpret’ this activity, so different from official descriptions<sup>5</sup> and so potentially condemnable by the international community (that certainly associates peace-building with demilitarisation and not the other way round), will be met by evasiveness if not silence. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is one of the principal donors of NURC and sponsors the camps directly (under its Programme for Strengthening Good Governance (PSGG)). After much insisting, an employee sent me a one-page document (UNDP 2008) describing the NURC activities supported by UNDP funding. The document uses a highly sanitised language; the word *ingando* is not mentioned and instead the document speaks of ‘seminars’ and ‘workshops’ ‘on unity and reconciliation’ aimed at ‘engaging [a given section of the population] about the prevailing genocide ideology.’ As will be shown, *ingando* is not only much more than these descriptions suggest, it might be something else altogether.

*Is ingando a ‘unity-building tool’ — exclusively, primarily, partially? If so, what type of unity is being enacted through it? Could ingando also be, for example, a ‘technology of power’ (Foucault 1980: 135)?* In order to find out what is this thing called *ingando*, I approach it from different analytical angles — i) looking at its history; ii) studying it as a social situation by exploring comparisons and contrasts among different *ingando*; iii) analysing *ingando*’s selective targeting (why this choice of target populations?); iv) examining the different components of *ingando* (the actual ‘goings-on’) and the way they are interpreted by *ingando* participants; as well as its v) spatial, symbolic and performative elements.

### 3 Evolutions and inspirations of a ‘tradition’

As most other activities of unity and reconciliation, *ingando* is highlighted as Rwandan tradition. NURC traces today’s camps to the pre-colonial military custom of ‘halting normal activities to reflect on, and find solutions to national challenges.’<sup>6</sup> An organiser of the first post-genocide *ingando* suggests that the name originates from *kuganda* — to camp. It is an allusion to ‘military guard duty on the border in the past, you go there and camp.’<sup>7</sup> According to *Inteko Izirikana*,<sup>8</sup> the concept was used in the military domain to signify either i) a space where troops readied for combat; ii) a temporary resting place for the soldiers in their military expeditions; or iii) a temporary accommodation for the king and his entourage during their rounds. In a related interpretation, *ingando* used to be military encampments where the campaign strategy would be reflected on and where

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<sup>4</sup> *Ingando* was described to me as a unity and reconciliation tool already in my first interview with the administrator of Nkumba *ingando*, 23 March 2008.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. *Ingando* at Nkumba is called a ‘Peace and Leadership Academy’.

<sup>6</sup> See NURC website. (<http://www.nurc.gov.rw/reconciliation-tools/ingando.html>)

<sup>7</sup> Interview with the Director of Programmes at the National Youth Council, 13 January 2009.

<sup>8</sup> Local NGO of elderly community members aiming to revitalise Rwandan culture; in Gashanana 2005: 9.

soldiers received their final briefing before combat.<sup>9</sup> The salient characteristics of pre-colonial *ingando* then are i) its encamped and transient nature; and ii) the military character of the space.

However, there is no clear temporal continuum to *ingando*. *Ingando* as military retreats stopped along with the days of *abamis'* (kings') grand military exploits. "*Ingando* lost its relevance in the colonial era, together with other monarchic institutions and practices", according to Shyaka (2007). The current version shows only a tenuous link to the *ingando* of yesteryear; those few aspects that are indeed shared (i.e. the military component) are precisely those that the government does not prefer to highlight. The fundamentally military gatherings of old times are quite expeditiously reinterpreted as nation-building tools, first and foremost: "In [today's] *ingando*, individuals are reminded to subject their interests to the national ideal and give Rwanda their all" (General Rusagara, quoted in PRI 2004: 111).

A number of people outside and, importantly, inside the government suggest that today's '*ingando*' is in fact a relatively recent occurrence, dating to a number of identifiable predecessors and influences in the *Tutsi diaspora*. My informants traced *ingando* to the politicisation campaigns and 'raising of awareness' conducted by the RPF first in exile and later within Rwanda as they kept capturing territory before taking over power (during the 1990-1994 war). 'Before 1994 [inside Rwanda], there was no *ingando*, it was inspired in the diaspora. After the [current] government was installed, it started putting this in place.'<sup>10</sup> Tito Rutaremara, the founder of the RPF in exile and a veteran of Rwandan politics confirms this: "First we were doing them, the RPF, during and before the struggle. [...] It started within the RPF and then was adopted by others. NURC [later] used this instrument for all people."<sup>11</sup>

As Mgbako (2005) and Reed (1995) already hypothesised, RPF mobilisation of support in the diaspora was the main reason for organising or supporting what became the predecessors of today's *ingando*. According to Rutaremara, *ingando*'s aim was "to bring people together and share the ideals of RPF. There were three purposes — to politicise people, to bring people to discuss on problems; to remember Rwanda; [and] to bring people to help the needy."<sup>12</sup> A historian of the RPF suggests that "[*ingando*] was a tool of mobilising members from all over" but while in pre-colonial Rwanda it was exclusively a thing of the military, "in RPF context [in the diaspora], it was a mix [of different aspects]."<sup>13</sup> 'Camps' or 'retreats' served three main objectives for *banyarwanda* populations in exile. Initially, they were used to raise awareness of being Rwandan, and promote 'solidarity' or self-help. Gradually, politicisation of diaspora members and provision of military training were added.

Today's *ingando* allegedly draws most inspiration from camps organised by Rwandan refugee youth in Burundi. These young people organised retreats for self-help, raising of cultural awareness and later politicisation.<sup>14</sup> Importantly, the camps did not start as a RPF mobilisation platform. They had to be made into one: "In Burundi, there was a youth organisation that was very strong. When RPF reached Burundi, they transformed

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<sup>9</sup> Suggested by Rusagara, a General and *ingando* camp instructor (NTK, 1 March 2006) not in reference list.

<sup>10</sup> Interview with the Muhazi camp coordinator, 28 January 2009.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with the Ombudsman Rutaremara, 14 January 2009.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with an 'independent consultant' and author of a book on RPF history, 22 January 2009

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

this youth organisation into RPF youth. But they already had many activities — to meet in some place and help the community —[that were] practiced much before the RPF.”<sup>15</sup>

*Ingando* also seems to refer to other types of semi-clandestine political meetings in exile. “People would meet for a month, they could take [over] a home of someone, even in Kampala, and meet there. There were many strategies so that the security and police would not know. ‘Just a family visit,’ [we would pretend]. There were strict communication rules. But this was just political and cultural, not military, the noise [of military training] could attract some curiosity.”<sup>16</sup> But this changed after the victory of Museveni’s NRM in 1986. The Uganda-based Rwanda Alliance for National Unity (RANU) decided to increase its support base by changing its political programme and its name to ‘RPF.’ The party supposedly started organising ‘political/military schools’ in Uganda and Tanzania where “cadres learned about the goals of the RPF and received military training, though without weapons” (Reed 1995: 51).

During the 1990-1994 civil war, ‘political schools’ were organised within Rwanda itself with the help of RPF cells based there (Reed 1996: 496). “From 1990 to 1993, the RPF installed participants in *ingando* or ‘RPF schools’ for three weeks, after which participants would be expected to return to their villages and disseminate pro-RPF ideology” (Mgbako 2005: 208).

- *In the beginning of the 1990s, 1991/92, the RPF had [captured] a piece of land in the north [of Rwanda] and then organised ingando with military aspects there, but even for civilian cadres [they offered] military and political training. If they could, they would train everyone militarily, to demystify weapons, so that people would not be afraid of soldiers. [...] If we could train the whole population [we would], it is a way to upgrade their minds to this mystification of army and soldiers.*

- *And political education?*

- *Political education was most important, there was a message to deliver.*<sup>17</sup>

The overall RPF strategy of consolidating and politicising its support base through special seminars and retreats draws on Yoweri Museveni’s own guerrilla strategy during the years of the NRA insurgency (1981-1986) and before. Inspired by Maoist principles, the National Resistance Movement (NRA, composed of many Rwandan refugees in Uganda) had a ‘political commissar’ in every unit and organised political education classes in which “African history and politics were taught from a revolutionary perspective” (Kinzer 2008: 44). Museveni viewed his army as a ‘people’s army’ and his soldiers as ‘politicians in uniform’ (HRW 1999). The RPA/RPF under the leadership of Rwigema and Kagame seem to have followed this approach. In a sense, this campaign of ‘winning the hearts and minds’ has not finished. The northern part of Rwanda was not pacified until 2000 and the enemy perseveres today in the disguise of ‘divisionism’ and ‘genocide ideology.’ For Kagame, political conversion is part of the struggle; it is in reality ‘the tricky part’ [the real challenge].<sup>18</sup>

But Uganda also offered a more concrete inspiration. Much before the RPF took power in Rwanda, the victorious NRM had translated its own war politicisation agenda into political schools in peacetime. The NRM’s wartime ‘mobile schools’ of political education were transformed upon victory into a permanent institution — The National School of Political Education (HRW 1999). During interviews with Nkumba *ingando* participants, I repeatedly heard them refer to their morning running/parades/marching exercise as *muchaka* or *muchaka muchaka*. After a while, I learned this was Swahili military jargon, an onomatopoeic expression mimicking the ‘sound made by military boots during

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Interview with an ‘independent consultant’ and author of a book on RPF history, op.cit.

<sup>18</sup> Kagame reminiscing on the late 1990s; in Kinzer (2008: 215).

marches' (ibid). It is also the name of NRM political and military education camps described by HRW (1999:66) as

*a political and military science course [and] one of the tools used by the NRM government to increase its political control, targeted particularly at civil servants and graduating students. [...] [It includes] demystification of the gun and political education, which included the history of Uganda according to the NRM — a crude form of historical materialism placing blame for Uganda's past woes on the political parties.*

Besides the contents of lessons, the descriptions of a typical day at Chaka-Mchaka correspond very closely to the structure of the elite Nkumba *ingando* in Rwanda (for example, 'In the morning, you start with *chaka-mchaka* at 6 a.m. At 10 a.m. the political lectures begin,' HRW 1999). The NRM (Uganda's governing party) also organises camps called *Kyankwanzi*, which are run by the military and are similar to *Mchaka*. The facility in Kiboga is called 'National Leadership Institute' (in close parallel to the Nkumba camp in Rwanda) and the training is meant to be 'part of preparation for the implementation of the *Bonna Bagaggawale* (prosperity for all) programme.'<sup>19</sup>

Now that we have looked at influences, parallel institutions and inspirations in the past and mostly outside Rwanda, let us look at the history of *ingando* camps *after* the RPF take-over, and let us consider their transformation from wartime and exile political schools to government-employed strategy of social re-engineering on a large-scale and targeting specific populations. When did the new GNU institutionalise *ingando*? Shyaka (2007) writes that the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) 'revived' *ingando* 'after the 1994 genocide' to initially integrate the ex-FAR combatants into the new army. Mgbako (2005: 209) suggests that the first large-scale *ingando* were organised in 1996 for Tutsi returnees. David Nsenga, the organiser of the first *youth ingando* (which he suggests started around 1997/1998), speaks of three main target groups at the beginning: the youth, the Hutu returnees, and the Tutsi returnees from different diasporas.

The first *ingando* for youth were organised by the Ministry of Youth, Culture and Sports 'with the [financial] support of UNICEF.'<sup>20</sup> In fact, the large tented camps of Gishari (Eastern Province) holding up to 2,000 students, as well as camps elsewhere, were also supported by UNHCR and WHO. In 1999, NURC took over the camps for college entrants, while other ministries and institutions organised *ingando* for other select populations. *Ingando* started as tented camps, and only gradually were permanent sites and structures developed like those in Nkumba in the northern region. 'It really started like scout jamborees, conversations by the fire, and later activities were added such as constructions of houses for widows and orphans.'<sup>21</sup>

Organising retreats of this kind posed huge challenges in the post-genocide Rwanda filled with suspicion and distrust:

*But going on field trips? People ran from the government, they were afraid of them [why?] because they were made to be afraid, people were told 'you would be killed.' We are an oral society, news travel through the tongue. [...] In one of the past camps, in what used to be Mutara district, the parents that were sending their children expressed the view, the rumour, that their kids would be killed. 'We will not see them anymore,' they were saying. ...As a result [to deal with this], we played the voices of the children over the radio. It was that much frightening! After some days in the camps, people started to talk, that is in fact how we found out about the rumour.'*<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> New Vision Uganda (2008).

<sup>20</sup> Interview with the Director of Programmes at the National Youth Council, op.cit.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

Even today, after more than a decade of *ingando*, students at NUR in Butare recall: 'On the first day, I was very afraid of seeing soldiers, guns, and the way they directed us. I was afraid we might die there, the way they beat some of our students, the first day was fear.' Or: 'The first day, they try to terrify us...already as you leave the bus, you already start physical exercise, you carry your bag on your shoulders, you kneel and go...you cannot say any word because you feel fear.' Or: 'The first impressions, you are afraid...because there are people who say that 'you will do forced labour, military exercises, which are hard.'

Most political figures and camp organisers stress that the main idea of *ingando*, especially in the early stages and for returnees, was to 'open the reality of the country,' build confidence among people, and most importantly, build a sense of national unity. The idea comes up repeatedly:

- NURC Programme Officer for Advocacy (in Mgbako 2005: 8):

*Ingando were to 'foster a sense of nationalism among the returnee populations from Congo, Burundi, Uganda and Europe, and elsewhere...We thought that if we could remove these people from their daily lives and bring them together to share from a common dish — to eat and sleep together — this would build confidence in the diverse populations of repatriated Rwandans, confidence that we could indeed live together.*

- Director of the National Youth Council, an organiser of the first youth *ingando*:

*You were frightened of one another [the different returnee groups], there were different cultural attitudes, speaking different languages, the camps were to show that we were all Banyarwanda.*

- RPF Communications Adviser:

*Ingando is a seminar of sorts for the youth, those that came from the diaspora and those who have stayed in Rwanda. It shows the most important elements that are common to all, the bases of the nation, what makes the unity of Rwandans, what is the role of ethnicity...how to construct the nation, that is ingando.*

In the rest of the section, we will try and scrutinise this narrative of *ingando*-as-nation-building from different angles. *What type of unity is to be built and how? Is national unity the main purpose and outcome? If there are others, what are they and what is their significance? How does military training and multiple lengthy courses, in addition to cultural performances, fit into the 'nation-building' plan, if at all? Ingando engineers and administrators themselves suggest that something altogether different than building unity based on cultural learning, confidence-building and enactments of 'life together' is at play, and namely the 'cleansing of people's minds' and fostering of 'one way of looking at things':*

- A linguist and Director of KIST Language Centre:

*Ingando was made to address these various backgrounds which prevented people to really work together as before, as it had been for centuries, so one way of addressing [this] was some kind of cleansing of people's minds from this dirt accumulated by situations and recent history...[It was necessary] for all people, refugees and people who were here.*

- A current *ingando* camp administrator:

*Ingando [help] bring together the vision of the country, the policies of the government, it becomes easier for many people to know many things [when they are] in the same place...Before university, students go to Nkumba [ingando], to install sense of patriotism, to equip them with... they must have one way of looking at things, especially government policy.*

- RPF Communications Adviser:

*We have opposed memories about the history of Rwanda, we do not agree. [But] one needs a consensus to make a nation.*

For now, however, let us return to the history of *ingando*, and ask the following question: *What might the history of ingando – the influences that shaped it, the*



*inspirations it draws on, the transformations it has undergone – tell us about what it is ‘all about’?* To begin with, many aspects of today’s *ingando* remind us of where it came from — the left-inspired guerrilla politicisation strategy traceable to a specific era and a number of countries in the region, if not Africa. In a more direct connection, it brings us to the politico-military schools and seminars of the RPF in diaspora, and to the successful translation of political education camps from war- to peace-time in countries such as Uganda and Tanzania. *Ingando* has evolved, it has been adapted to the challenges of a post-genocide society as the government saw them, it has been scaled-up and tailored to different target groups. Nonetheless, *ingando* in Nkumba or Gato remind us clearly of their predecessors — they are led and organised by the military and involve, among other things, gun demystification, an accent on discipline, physical exercises and military training. Politicisation remains important, with discussions on government policy and political history as part of the curriculum.

As Mgbako (2005) has suggested, *ingando* might be about “mainstreaming participants into the RPF political ideology.” After all, the success of the RPF armed movement was based on rallying the previously fragmented diaspora around a particular political platform (its own); it was about maintaining strong internal coherence and a ‘unified vision.’ This is why the mainstreaming is indeed a form of ‘unity’ being pursued — the form highlighted at the end of the previous chapter, unity as ‘convergence.’ Certainly, we could also draw a parallel with the RPF ‘capture’ of the Burundian refugee youth in the 1980s and say that it continues to try and form ‘RPF youth’ through *ingando* camps for university entrants. This is not so surprising: All regimes aspiring to ideological domination take care of the incoming elites, which are those meant to reproduce it. The educated youth is both those who are to be transformed in the camps and those who later need to lead that process.

Unity-building or nation-building is also, of course, part of *ingando* as it has been historically. Except now this component is not so much a reminder of ‘where you really come from’ and a manner of maintaining links with a cultural past (and thus a politico-national project) as it used to be in the diaspora. In post-genocide Rwanda, it has transformed into an attempt to teach a severely divided population that being Rwandan matters above all else, as well as to teach them what being Rwandan means. It was and remains an attempt to create this overarching loyalty through multiple strategies.

In fact, as will become apparent, all six government ‘unity-building’ strategies identified in the previous chapter can be found in *ingando*: i) fostering of ‘Rwandanness,’ which includes the teaching of reinterpreted history and patriotic attitudes; ii) a revival of ‘Rwandanicity’ (‘being Rwandan’) through cultural performances (song, dance and recital); iii) a rallying of people around a ‘common vision;’ iv) a cultivation of the ‘greater us’ with reminders about the ‘greater other’ by performing the military ‘mindset;’ v) the ‘being together,’ which can only be effectively attempted in simulated and removed settings; and, finally, vi) the ‘opening of the realities of the country’ through travel, through breaking out of the local, through meeting and seeing difference. It is for this reason – because all the multiple strategies find their staging ground here (plus spatial and symbolic aspects) – that the *ingando* camps represent such rich cultural space.

## 4 *Ingando* as a social situation in contemporary Rwanda

### Dimensions of contrast

Rwandan *ingando* have been targeting different types of population. Those who have gone through the camps include 'old caseload' and 'new caseload' returnees, ex-FAR soldiers and demobilised rebels (adult and youth ex-combatants), provisionally-released prisoners and those serving 'alternative sentences' (TIG programme takes a form of *ingando*), prison-born children, public and (as of recently) private university entrants, groups of uneducated youth, college students in diaspora, head teachers of primary and secondary schools and district education officers, civil servants, the *inyangamugayo* (*gacaca* judges), various associations (ATRACO 'taxi' [bus] drivers, tea growers, masons), sexual workers, hawkers ('informal sector workers'), informal cash changers, and street children.

Some *ingando* have been happening periodically (for example, for university entrants), others have been one-time occasions (as for teachers and head teachers). *Ingando* can take anywhere from days to (more likely) weeks and months. *Ingando* for students used to be three months long, this gradually decreased to two months, one month, and, currently, three weeks. Teachers also spent three months in *ingando* (June - August 2005). All returnees from Democratic Republic of Congo attended for one month.<sup>23</sup> Youth ex-combatants spend as long in *ingando* as it takes to find a family they can 'return' to; this can mean months, and in extreme cases, years spent in the confined space of the camp. Total numbers regarding attendance have never been published and only very partial counts can be gleaned from documents/press or deduced.<sup>24</sup> *Ingando* have been organised in all parts of the country. They normally target adults, but recently NURC's Executive Secretary suggested that "given their impact on society, children should be no exception in these important trainings that instil a culture of togetherness" (Nkurunziza for NTK, 8 May 2009).

*Ingando* have been organised by different government organs and non-governmental institutions. NURC in collaboration with other institutions<sup>25</sup> organises only *ingando* for university entrants at Nkumba and students from the diaspora at the Gako military academy. But other *ingando* exist. Even when they are not labelled as such, upon probing the organisers readily admit that 'yes, this is an *ingando*.' *Ingando* is a form of social gathering. Most *ingando* are state-organised. I found only one exception in the form of the Adventist *ingando* for local youth organised by local church administration. The Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) organises *ingando* for adult and youth ex-combatants. The Ministry of Gender and Family Planning organises *ingando* for street children. MINALOC is also known to have organised *ingando*. The City of Kigali has organised *ingando* for masons.

### Important shared aspects

*Ingando* share important spatial, temporal, symbolic and performative aspects. All *ingando* are transitory experiences, taking place in an unfamiliar setting. They involve large groups of people (in the hundreds) going through the same experiences. Many *ingando* are located in remote, secluded areas. A sense of distance and separation is also

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<sup>23</sup> Interview with a civil servant who participated in one of the *ingando*., 13 February 2009.

<sup>24</sup> About 6,000 university entrants pass annually through Nkumba *ingando* alone; in the years 2009-2012, NURC estimated that 50,000 students would have gone through the camps (NURC 2009).

<sup>25</sup> NURC collaborates with the ministries of Education, Foreign Affairs, Defense and the Student Financing Agency of Rwanda (SFAR).



achieved by lack of communication with the outside — the use of mobile phones is not allowed. Separation is further enhanced by change of attire — in some *ingando*, people put on uniforms or get new clothes. There is no movement in and out of the camp (with the exception of nearby work sites such as in TIG and Adventist *ingando*).

Attendance at all *ingando* is mandatory.<sup>26</sup> The time is highly structured. Hierarchies are elaborated. There is an accent on discipline and respect of authority. The spatial structure of different *ingando* also shows shared characteristics. As opposed to the past when *ingando* were short-term campgrounds with tents made of wood and plastic sheeting, most *ingando* today take place in permanent or semi-permanent structures. The exception again is the Adventist *ingando* (and presumably other church-organised *ingando*), taking the form of an ad-hoc tented camp. TIG camps are semi-permanent — they can stay in the same place for years (until tasks are finished) but they are composed of makeshift structures (mainly tree branches and plastic sheeting).

In terms of content, out of the four general categories of activity – military training, manual labour, lectures and cultural activities – all *ingando* comprise the latter two. Lectures are the most important shared aspect; they are a salient feature of all *ingando*.<sup>27</sup> All *ingando* also comprise *igitaramo* or *ikitamadune* — an evening gathering of song and dance. Singing and dancing might be interspersed throughout the day, too, for example, during breaks between lectures. Military training is not a universal component. After all, most adult and child ex-combatants are all too familiar with it. In the past, *ingando* for DRC returnees also did not have military training either and were rather focused on ‘reconciliation and what we used to call Marxism-Leninism.’<sup>28</sup> However, physical exercise is present in all *ingando* as is the emphasis on discipline. All *ingando* also involve call-and-reply commands interspersed throughout the day.

Regarding manual work, this is, of course, the main component of TIG. Where others spend seven hours a day in an *ingando* class, TIGistes perform hard physical labour, with shorter and more spaced classes (after all, they are in TIG for years) in the evenings combined with *utemaduni*. But even the two-week long Adventist youth *ingando* had a work task to accomplish. The goal was to build 100 houses for Rwandan returnees from Tanzania in the completely unsettled area of the Akagera Park.

### Characteristics shared with other activities

Just like other complex social situations, *ingando* does not possess a strictly delimited identity. Rather, different camps are tied together in a system of ‘family resemblance’ — a pool of widely shared aspects where i) no one aspect is essential to all; and ii) a number of aspects, though not every aspect, has to be present for something to be called an *ingando*. At the ‘outskirts’ of concepts like these, we find pathways to other similar social situations that might only share one or two characteristics with *ingando*. In other words, its characteristics seep over to or from other activities and can help identify the relatives.

### Camps and retreats

The more distant relatives of *ingando* are the other encamped experiences, including refugee camps, transit camps, training camps (for police and intelligence officers),

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<sup>26</sup> While there is no law requiring attendance, it is far from voluntary. According to HRW (2000), participants attend because they feel obliged to do so or have been told by the authorities that they must. Returning refugees would be unable to find a job without attending, students on government scholarships cannot proceed to university without civic education. A NURC employee told me students have to show their *ingando* certificate before entering university.

<sup>27</sup> The amount of ‘schooling’ per day might vary, and is in fact inversely proportional to the length of the camp, with longer *ingando* having less intense daily education programmes.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with a civil servant, 13 February 2009.

scouts jamborees, or retreats. For example, in February, Rwandan leaders go on the annual *umwiherero* — a ‘week away’ meant for planning and strategy. *Umwiherero* means ‘to go somewhere where there are no distractions, no communication with the outside world, to think about strategy.’<sup>29</sup> Refugee camps, on the other hand, provide a powerful contrasting liminality. Whereas *ingando* are meant to be transition spaces to the ‘New Rwanda’ and social laboratories of the ‘new citizen,’ refugee camps provide no transition and no integration. They are places of containment symbolising exclusion from citizenship. Perhaps the most powerful show of this is the Gihembe refugee camp, home to 17,000 ‘Congolese’ refugees. This compact settlement hugging a hilltop sits right next to the sprawling city of Byumba. The proximity-yet-separateness is so stark that even to the naked eye of a casual observer, this becomes a potent show of the ‘exclusionary’ double: the city of non-citizens.

### **Jamborees**

An encamped experience close to that of *ingando* is a scout jamboree. Before the 1990-1994 war, scout camps were organised in Rwanda by the churches: the JOC (*Jeunesse Ouvrière Catholique*) and the *Xaveriens* (Gashanana 2005: 9). These groups met regularly in a given place and had a set work goal (hence sometimes referred to as ‘work camps;’ *ibid*). The scouts also worked on their physical skills, moral character, and received training regarding ‘beneficial practices in daily life’ (*ibid*). The contemporary *ingando* that most resembles a jamboree (and that I have visited) is the Adventist youth camp at the border with Tanzania. Although the Adventist church tries to differentiate itself from the state,<sup>30</sup> its camps (organised three times a year) have, for a number of reasons, become more of an *ingando* than a jamboree. On one hand, there is no military training and there is always a work objective, usually the construction of houses. On the other hand, already during the first moments inside the camp, one can see the spatial hierarchies and the accent on discipline. There are the *igitaramo* in the evenings, interspersed with lectures. There is the direct intermeshing of the state: an organiser told me that it was the state who ‘requested them’ to put together an *ingando* and construct houses for the returnees. In fact, during the night I visited, I came with NURC to give lectures on unity and reconciliation.<sup>31</sup>

### ***Itorero ry’Igihugu* — ‘The National Academy’**

*Itorero* schools are the closest relative of *ingando*; often referred to as ‘advanced *ingando*.’ *Itorero* is also highlighted as Rwandan ‘tradition.’ General Rusagara, an *ingando* lecturer, relates *ingando* to the broader practices of *amatorero* (military regiments) of the pre-colonial period where “both young men and women would be given lessons in history and culture, trying to instil a common identity” (PRI 2004: 111). From interviews and other accounts, it is apparent that *itorero* resembles *ingando*. It includes political education, military training, lessons on patriotism, family planning, fighting of genocide ideology, East Africa Community, among others. All *itorero* close with a mass graduation ceremony held at the Amahoro stadium in Kigali.

*Itorero* in contemporary Rwanda is a relatively recent occurrence. Nonetheless, it has grand aims of reaching every person. “*Itorero* will *profoundly change* the outlook of civic education by making it more embedded at the local level. It will be the first *itorero* graduates — *intore* or ‘cadres’ — who will then organise *ingando* in all districts and, ultimately, at the lowest administrative level — the village” (Kabeera for NTK, 21 January 2011, emphasis added). In the few years since its inception in 2007, about 158,394 people passed through *itorero* (as of December 2009). With the structure

<sup>29</sup> Naturally, retreats are used all around the world by large and small corporations to create a sense of ‘togetherness’ among people who are fundamentally strangers.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with the Executive Secretary of the East Rwanda Association of the Adventist Church, 21 January 2009.

<sup>31</sup> Visit to Kageyo *ingando* at the Tanzania border, op.cit.

embedded at administrative levels (and ever lower ones), these numbers should multiply dramatically. Last but not least, *itorero* reaches beyond Rwanda — it has been implemented in the diaspora. In 2010, “350 students underwent the programme in Belgium while over 4,000 are expected to be trained in India this year [2011]” (ibid).

## 5 Selective targeting and the meanings it unlocks

Ideally, all Rwandans should pass through *ingando* once in their life.<sup>32</sup> Limited resources, however, have not allowed this. Only select groups that ‘need it the most’ have undergone the camps. *Why are these specific groups chosen?* In what follows, I want to show that selective targeting, in itself, can help us interpret the camps. Selectivity is revelatory because it helps us get at the viewpoint of the organisers and understand the specific social engineering goals that these camps are meant to serve.

Based on my analysis, the government constitutes three broad categories of people as being in special need of re-education: i) groups perceived as *most at disconnect or discrepancy/ opposition* with the official discourse and the rules of the ‘New Rwanda;’ ii) the groups that need to be most *in line* with it; and, finally, iii) the perceived *social deviants* that need to be ‘brought back into the fold’ of law-abiding citizenry or simply people perceived in need of proper socialisation.

The first group comprises new and old caseload returnees, adult and child ex-combatants, and provisionally-released prisoners or prisoners serving alternative sentences in TIG. For these populations, *ingando* is both a physical transitory space (from outside inside their communities) and figurative one as well (from outside inside the new ideology). The transmission of official scripts might be especially important in *ingando* organised for these populations because they are either most at a disconnect with the discourse (returnees, ex-combatants who have lived abroad for an extended period or their whole life); and/or ii) most in opposition to it (released prisoners, some Hutu returnees and ex-combatants, all potentially harbouring ‘divisionism’). The camps are like ‘foyers of return’ (whether from exile or prison), aiming to ‘close the gap’ before an actual return to daily life and ‘full’ entry into Rwanda. ‘For example the prisoners, they cannot go from the prison [straight] to the community. They have to go to *ingando* as transition, so that they are prepared before they enter the system.’<sup>33</sup>

*Ingando* for these populations is really an integration exercise outfitted not only with ‘political’ and ‘history’ education, but also more practical lessons on policies and programmes of the government, lessons concerning health or literacy education. For a large subset of these groups, this is also a ‘re-orientation’ exercise. While for the old caseload Tutsi returnees the primary attempt was to foster a sense of unity, for the ‘new caseload’ Hutu *ingando* was equally an attempt to override divisionism. The camps were meant to “promote ideas of nationalism, erase ethnically-charged lessons of the previous government and spur loyalty to the RPF” (HRW 2000: 3).

On 24 May 1997, President Pasteur Bizimungu officially launched a programme for ‘national political awareness’ for the returning Hutu. In his address, he talked about a recently-instituted youth camp: “This camp, like many others which will take place

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<sup>32</sup> According to the administrator of Mutobo camp, “[the plan is] by 2020, everyone has passed there.” According to the administrator of the Nkumba camp, “*ingando* is for all Rwandese... but not all attend due to money and time constraints.” According to Mgbako (2005: 209) “the NURC National Plan is for every Rwandan of majority age to attend *ingando* at some point during his or her life.”

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Muhazi camp coordinator, op.cit.

countrywide are aimed at integrating the youth that have just returned from exile in the current social and political life” (BBC, 24 May 1997). The camps were instituted because the government felt such repatriated people needed ‘disintoxication’ (AFP, 19 November 1997), ‘clearing of minds’ (Xinhua, 18 February 1998) after exposure to Hutu extremist brainwashing in the refugee camps. The total number of participants, either ‘old caseload’ or ‘new caseload’ returnees, is not known and only bare estimates can be made.<sup>34</sup>

Often imprisoned since the end of the genocide, the provisionally-released prisoners<sup>35</sup> are in a sense themselves newcomers to Rwanda. Their re-education was thus as important as for the returnees and perhaps more so as they were seen to be the prime harbingers of divisionism. A prisoner at Nsinda confessed, “I never thought I would see this country again, I have been living in this country without seeing it. I am sure many things have changed” (Internews, 31 February 2003). Jomba Gakumba instructs the *ingando* participants, “You have been in prison for long and I want to tell you that Rwanda is no longer the same” (Sabiiti for NTK, 28 February 2007). From 2003 when the releases commenced until 2007, approximately 56,000 released prisoners participated in *ingando*.

‘Erasing of old beliefs,’ ‘erasing of political ideologies of previous regime,’ ‘reorientation,’ ‘reorienting of minds’ and ‘sensitisation’ were frequently deployed descriptions by a variety of reporters. *Ingando* was further described as teaching the participants how to be ‘good citizens’ (Hirondelle, 6 May 2003), aiding their ‘harmonious integration into society’ (AFP, 27 January 2003) or ‘rehabilitation into society’ (Ntambara for Internews, 26 February 2003), helping them ‘learn how to lead a normal life again’ (Xinhua, 23 April 2004), ‘how to better associate with members of their own communities’ (NTK, 28 February 2007). ‘After being out of touch with the ordinary people, there is a need for them to be taught about what the new Rwanda needs. It is not division but unity’ (ibid). A participant at Kucikiro camp says that “we learn that there are no Hutus, Tutsis or Twas, we are all and only Rwandans” (AFP, 12 August 2005).

The second group comprises those that need to be most *in line* with the official discourses and the rules. On the whole, these are not recent returnees to their communities: their transition is not physical but merely figurative/symbolic (to harness the desired ideologies). This group comprises the educated elite (mainly university entrants in Rwanda and Rwandans studying abroad, but also teachers and education officers and government officials) and the less-educated or non-educated youth. Educated youth is ‘especially important’ because they are ‘the future leaders, the future elite.’<sup>36</sup> The participants realise this: “They [the government] know we will become valuable, we will work for the country, so we are here to be well prepared.”<sup>37</sup> *Ingando* is to give information to the intellectuals, the *abanyabwenge*.<sup>38</sup> Educated youth are in fact constituted as both hope and potential danger — it was the elites planning the genocide, after all. The uneducated youth are simply the potential danger — it was the uneducated youth that carried the genocide out. NURC focuses exclusively on ‘future elites’ while non-governmental organisations (different churches) organise *ingando* for the rest.

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<sup>34</sup> By 1997, 44,000 ‘new caseload’ refugees passed through solidarity camps (AFP, 19 November 1997).

<sup>35</sup> To ease prison overcrowding, Kagame issued a decree in 2003 to start a phased provisional release of genocide suspects who confessed and who were either elderly or terminally ill or ran the risk of being in prison longer than the sentences they were expected to incur.

<sup>36</sup> Interview with the Nkumba camp coordinator, Kigali, 26 March 2008.

<sup>37</sup> Interview with a Nkumba *ingando* participant, Butare, 6 February 2009.

<sup>38</sup> Interview with another Nkumba *ingando* participant, Butare, 4 February 2009.

Finally, the third category comprises under-socialised groups or perceived social deviants. The groups targeted include prostitutes, street sellers,<sup>39</sup> children born in prisons, and street children. Children born in prison and given to foster families at age three are sent to 're-education centres' at around age fourteen. There they gain 'understanding of politics,' and are shown 'how one lives in good harmony with other members in the society.'<sup>40</sup> '[Me:] But these children have not done anything.' 'Yes it is true, and it is precisely to allay the fears of the community why they are sent there. It is to show that these children have not participated, and they are sensitised to co-exist with others. It is to show the population, this is not their fault, it is the fault of the adults.'<sup>41</sup>

In this *ingando* category, I am most familiar with the street children *ingando* in Rwamagana. Re-education of street children (*abana bo muhanda, mayibobo*) includes many lessons that can be found in other *ingando* (for example, the history of Rwanda, genocide, fighting of the genocide ideology, the Vision 2020) but it takes place in a unique setting. While most *ingando* camps are simple structures in remote areas, some purposefully trying to demonstrate the 'hardships of life' to its participants (i.e. young adults), for street children the strategy is reversed — they have to be given an incentive to stay. 'If you put them [say] in Gisheri [camp], they will run away, all of them. [So instead] they live in a hotel [at the outskirts of Rwamagana], they eat well, they get enough food, they drink soda.'<sup>42</sup>

When I first entered the *ingando* classroom full of kids, I was immediately overwhelmed by a restless and unconstrained energy, limbs flying everywhere, there was curiosity, laughter and loud talk. Precisely because these children were never properly socialised (through family and school) one could see in a sense what the Rwandan socialisation process accentuates. Rwandans are very sociable but their behaviour is also well manicured, composed, emotions are contained. Street children are indeed widely perceived as 'unsocialised elements' requiring intervention. Their way of life is associated with 'social evils': 'Some of them spend long time in the streets, some [are] already using drugs, [there is] no discipline to be adapted, [they] become thieves, stealing, fighting between them causing insecurity.'<sup>43</sup> Street children are 'outside' the social order of society but this has to change — They need to learn the 'love of work, they have to fight like the other children, like the other Rwandese.'<sup>44</sup> They need to find their place in the national development programme too: 'There is the Vision 2020, and they should know where they fit in achieving it.'<sup>45</sup>

## 6 Interpretations and analysis of components

The present section considers *ingando's* contents rather than its contexts. It will describe and analyse three key components – military training, lectures, and cultural

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<sup>39</sup> "The police associate hawking...and the wandering way of doing business with social evils" (Barigye for NTK, 29 December 2008).

<sup>40</sup> Interview with 'Association de Solidarité des Femmes Rwandaises' (ASOFERWA) employees, 3 November 2008.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Interview with the Street Children Unit Coordinator, MIGEPROF, 16 February 2009.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> A short interlude by one of the caretakers/teachers at the Rwamagana *ingando*, 16 March 2009.



activities – trying to answer the following questions: *What happens in these activities and how do participants interpret them? How do participants and non-participants explain what is the 'main objective' of ingando? In other words, how do they constitute what ingando is 'all about'?* The section draws on a wide variety of sources — observation, informal discussion as well as 40 semi-structured interviews and 73 questionnaires gathered from three types of participants: university students (who completed *ingando*), adult ex-combatants (undergoing *ingando*), and released prisoners (undergoing *ingando wa TIG*).<sup>46</sup>

#### A typical day at Nkumba<sup>47</sup>

The *kos* wake up very early, at 4-5 am. It is very very cold, it is night. The daily routine starts with *muchaka muchaka*: running, jogging. Then begin the *ingoroangiro* — the military exercises. We do stretching, push-ups, parades ('the walk of the military'). We learn how to hold and shoot *imbunda* — guns, how to dismantle a gun and put it together, how to clean it. Then we eat some *masaka*, sorghum porridge.

After breakfast, at 7:30-8am, a lecture starts in the large pentagon-shaped building in the centre of the premises. *Kos* learn different things on different days according to a set schedule. Every lecture is delivered by a different government representative. The guest lecturers talk about history, philosophy (idealism versus materialism), unity and reconciliation, genocide ideology and ways of avoiding it, military operations (different systems of combat), 'how politics was in the past and now,' and 'the programme of our state' — 'policy of Rwanda in each domain,' in economics (Vision 2020), environment, health (family planning, methods of contraception, HIV etc). We also learn about patriotism — 'the culture of liking our country' — and about *ubutwari* — heroism, and 'how our ancestors were heroes.' Classes can take up to eight hours per day.

The lunch is always beans and maize with extra rice or sweet potato added for supper. After lunch, either the lecture continues until the evening or there is practice of battle drills on the large clearance. In the evening, from 8pm until 10-11pm, we gather together for *gitaramo* or *ikitamaduni*. We sit on the ground and sing traditional songs, some people dance in the front. Sometimes there are poems — we say *kwivugo* or *icyivugo* — it is a poetic form recounting good achievements. There are traditional tales, even jokes. Then we go to sleep. It is the same every day.

#### Military training

*Ingando* at Nkumba is 'like a military camp, we behave like an army,' a participant tells me. Indeed, the camp is run by soldiers and all participants change into khaki uniforms and gum-boots upon arrival. They are divided into brigades, platoons and sections, each with its own leader. Each student has a paper card with their name, company, platoon, and section number stapled to the uniform. "RDF" is sewn on the pocket lapel just above the heart. The TIG camps are organised in the same way, though there are no military drills or military clothing. Whereas physical and military exercises are unique to Nkumba and *Gako*, the military accent on discipline and uniformity characterises all *ingando*. Commands with set replies intersperse lectures as well as the evening gatherings of song and dance: '*Morali!*' calls out a soldier walking between the rows of students gathered for the evening *utemaduni*. '*Mizuri!*' they call back. This type of call-and-reply slogans can be found in other *ingando* as well: '*Kos!*' shouts an organiser at Mutobo *ingando* for adult ex-combatants, '*Umoja!*' reply all in unison. '*Abajene!*' calls out

<sup>46</sup> The accent will be on Nkumba *ingando*. This is the 'flagship' *ingando* organised by NURC. It brings together young people from different backgrounds (survivors, children of perpetrators, old caseload refugees from different diasporas, both Hutu and Tutsi) and as such it is meant to (in addition to other aspects) 'enact coexistence.'

<sup>47</sup> Reconstructed on the basis of 40 interviews with students at NUR in February 2009. The question posed: 'Can you describe a typical day at *ingando* at Nkumba *ingando*?'

the coordinator at the *ingando* for street kids, 'Imbaraga z'igihugu' (the strength of the country) the crowd shouts back. 'TIG!' calls out a disciplinarian/ animator, 'Ubumwe n'ubwiyunge na duterimbere!' (unity, reconciliation and progress!), the TIGistes call back.

How do Nkumba participants interpret the inclusion of military training? Why is it such a pronounced aspect of camps organised by the National *Unity and Reconciliation* Commission? There are three main classes of response. Military training i) changes non-desirable social *attitudes*; ii) builds desired personal *attributes*; and iii) serves for actual physical *defence*. In terms of attitudes, four respondents mentioned that military training is included to demystify the gun, bring people to stop fearing soldiers and 'military matters,' and make them rise in respect by gaining valued skills. Seven other respondents believe military training is included to build desired personal attributes. The training is included 'to change our mentality.' Participants acquire the 'spirit of the soldier,' they become more disciplined and patriotic, they learn how 'not to be lazy, to be active.' Most respondents (eleven in total) believe that military training is included 'to defend in any way your nation' or for self-defence.

All of these aspects speak to the functions of militariness in the camps but they miss an important integrative effect of militariness as regards the type of learning and unity that happens in the camp. As the students themselves often recounted, while at the beginning they feared that the organisers wanted to make proper soldiers out of them, they quickly realised this was not the case. This is not a proper 'military service.' Nonetheless, the military format is essential. The military camp is a unique space where the military worldview is put into practice. Militariness and, specifically, exercise are meant to bring order and 'open up the mind for learning.'<sup>48</sup> A military context is also where three very specific unities are enacted and reinforced: i) solidification of in-group identity and creation of 'greater us' against the 'other' that threatens and that we prepare to fight; ii) homogenisation and uniformity — all dressed and treated the same, all respond not only instantly but equally; and iii) 'oneness' — everyone is an inseparable part of a broader project to which they have to surmise, they act in unison, in a coordinated way. There was one student who pointed out this latter dynamic: 'When they impose those disciplines, you feel the same people, you are one person.'

## Lectures

First, let us consider the context in which classes take place and what this might tell us about the type of learning that happens. The lecture theatre is always a single spacious room made to accommodate hundreds to more than a thousand people. This is one reason why *ingando* lectures resemble large sensitisation sessions, where incantation crowds out critical thinking. Though in Nkumba, two half-hour question and answer sessions are included in each daylong lecture, it is simply not possible to create an in-depth discussion. The aim of *ingando* is to get to the most people the quickest possible. 'Me, I was invited [to Nkumba *ingando*], but we professors, we are not comfortable in that space, [there is] not time for debate. [...] I went there once, there were 800 people, it is too many people, they can't discuss enough. So I say 'no' [now] but don't tell Fatuma! [he smiles]. They are politicians, they are doing their business.'<sup>49</sup>

In Nkumba there is also the added context of militariness that affects the nature of learning. Lengthy critical reflection is in direct clash with the military emphasis on immediate, unquestioning and coordinated response. Response of this kind directly enters the classroom in the form of interspersed call-and-reply slogans. This is not to mean that there is no dissent. The lecture on religion (materialism versus idealism), for example, was able to spark palpable wave of disagreement. There is also the direct and

<sup>48</sup> Interview with a MINALOC employee, 12 March 2009.

<sup>49</sup> Interview with the Head of the Conflict Management Centre, Butare, 4 February 2009.



indirect 'exit:' people sneak out of the classroom or they doze off, wander off in their thoughts or chat with those sitting next to them.

Second, let us look at the diversity of classes. The analysis of content again shows that topics beyond strictly unity and reconciliation are being taught. All these diverse lessons fall under the rubric of 'civic education.' In Nkumba, classes span from philosophy (materialism) to economic policies of the state and family planning. History classes are part of every *ingando*. Lake Muhazi and Mutobo *ingando* for former ex-combatants also include classes on various policies of the state so that the participants-returnees get a 'clear picture of their country.'<sup>50</sup> The official class list at Mutobo includes 35 different classes, among them patriotism, personal and community hygiene, decentralisation or the role of youth in development. The Muhazi camp for child ex-combatants includes 24 diverse lessons in 'civic education,' including, again, various history classes, STDs and HIV sensitisation, prevention of malaria, patriotism, or the role of police and community policing. These camps also include basic literacy and numeracy programmes, 'socialising activities' for child ex-combatants (comprising learning household tasks such as sweeping and carrying water) and psychosocial support. A similar list applies to TIG but there the added focus is on 'how to live with others, the survivors.'<sup>51</sup> The street children *ingando* also includes various lessons, including on history, 'the love of work,' Vision 2020 (a key government policy document), or hygiene and health.

As with other unity and reconciliation activities, what we witness is the interpenetration of themes with the goal of transformation of subjects. The three participant groups talk about transformation slightly differently, but the accent is always on altering the way one thinks and understands. The vocabulary of transformation permeates the student responses. *Ingando* 'brings them [the students] together to shape their mind.' The aim is to 'reform the young people,' 'civilise them,' 'open them,' 'to prepare them in mind' 'to change their mentality,' 'change their mental comportment.' 'The main intention is to rebuild youth, [to bring] mindset change,' 'That culture of divisionism, that culture of not having patriotism, that culture of genocide, to eradicate them in us.'

The notion of transformation also comes out from Mutobo responses. An ex-combatant writes that *ingando*'s aim is for 'those who were in the forest [in Congo] to remove their outside opinions,' 'to remove from our heads ideas that are not up to date.' A number of others suggest *ingando* changes a person 'in removing bad ideas and replacing these with good ideas,' 'in eradicating bad understanding (*imyumvire*),' 'in giving good constructive ideology (*ingengabitekerezo*) and removing destructive ideology,' 'in removing the ideology of the forest.' The TIGistes responses also highlight transformation, again using phrasing of 'good ideas' replacing 'bad ideas,' 'changing bad understanding,' 'removing past ideas' or 'all things of the past' (*ibitekerezo bya kera bimuvamo*). The courses help 'leave our past ideas (*kuva maricuraburindi* — literally to come out of darkness).' '*Ingando* can change a person because you get many courses on distinguishing *the good things* from the bad things (*kuvangura ibyiza mu bibi*).' Because of the 'courses given,' *ingando* can 'change a person who was bad to be good, even in his heart.' *Ingando* is meant to 'bring in a good way a perpetrator.' Using the verb '*gugorora*,' this literally means to 'straighten' a person, like one straightens a young tree so that it grows in the right direction.

Importantly, these lessons represent the issues on which alignment is important, where official scripts need to be upheld. As students noted: 'The aim of *ingando* is to be told the truth, to learn about the country, *to have the same view* [emphasis added].' Unity appears as 'unification of views:' 'Hutu and Tutsi used to have different ideas, but after the genocide, in *ingando*, *on les met en unité*' (we unify them). 'Before *ingando*, persons

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<sup>50</sup> Interview with Muhazi camp coordinator, 28 January 2009.

<sup>51</sup> Interview with one of the coordinators of the TIG *ingando* at Gasabo, 4 March 2009.

know many things that make them different. After *ingando*, they know the truth, they know the things in the same manner...they know one [a given] thing in the same sense.' Responses from Mutobo camp for adult ex-combatants also highlight convergence: 'The main purpose of *ingando* is to allow me to be on the same line — *murongo* (*kugendana mumurongo umwe*) as other Rwandans;' 'to know well the *umurongo* [line of conduct] of our country of Rwanda that should be followed (*kigenderaho*).'*Ingando* 'puts someone on the country's line of ideas/conduct' (*umurongo ngenderwaho w'igihugu*). Interestingly, at the end of our discussion, the head of the Centre for Conflict Management confesses empathy with the alignment agenda: 'I prefer them [the students] to be united than different, even if they are [thus] not specialised in scientific debate.'<sup>52</sup> Collective acceptance at the cost of personal freedom of thought and diversity is construed as a more desirable trade-off than individual critical thought at the possible cost of social division.

Finally, let us consider specific lectures key to building unity, specifically the pre-colonial historical narrative that is compactly reproduced in all *ingando*, as well as lessons on citizenship scripts (Rwandaness, Rwandanicity). In the TIG camp for released prisoners, the administrator enumerated different classes taught. "[Me:] Do you teach history as well?" "Of course, that falls under unity and reconciliation!" Indeed, history is construed as central to both reconciliation and unity. In terms of reconciliation, it is the 'restorative history,' opening the possibility of a life together by shifting the 'ultimate blame.' Unity is central to the narrative itself — pre-colonial history is one of unity among all Rwandans. The elaboration of the imposed nature of these categories is one of the central features of the official narrative taught at *ingando*. A NUR historian tells me that he is "not comfortable if all history is reduced to that...to looking for the [existence or non-existence] of Hutu, Tutsi, Twa."<sup>53</sup>

Responses to the question 'What did you learn about pre-colonial history?' both within a given *ingando* and across *ingando* produce the same standard narrative without fail. I include only one longer 'panel' (Malkki 1995) pieced together from multiple recollections.

*In pre-colonial times, there was unity among us [bari umwe]. Rwandans were together, they intermarried, they loved each other, they completed each other, they shared and they helped each other in everything. The kings ruled well, though nothing is pristine white/without blemish [ntabyera ngo de]. We were fighting together attacking our enemies. Our ancestors were heroes, willing even to die for the country. But the whites tried to make separation, they brought sectarianism so that they could rule us. Colonialists divided our people, telling us we have three ethnies —Hutu, Tutsi and Twa. Before colonialism, there were no ethnics, only economic stratification, and things like families, like lineages, like clans, abagesera, abatsobe, abega, abazigaba, abasinga... Tutsi [comes] from "gutunga" – to possess — [that is the] origin of the word. [Tutsi were] umutunzi – rich, have cows, it was a social class. Hutu [was] someone who does not have cows, only a cultivator. Hutus [were] sometimes given cows, 1,2 cows...when arrives to 10, you leave that social class, and then you becomes umutunzi, umukire, that means rich man. [Then] came Belgians. [They] said Hutu are the short people with big nose, Tutsi are so tall, thin.*

I asked, 'What is the main message of the history course?' The TIGistes reply:

*'To avoid the culture of ethnics. We are all one (umoya);' '[The message] is to leave the things of ethnicism (ibyamoko) that they lied to us about (batubeshye).' 'The message is that all people are equal, they all have the same blood, so they must share the best of the country without discrimination (ntawe uhenze undi — lit. without any more extortion (e.g. with milk),*

<sup>52</sup> Interview with the Head of the Centre for Conflict Management, op.cit.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

deception].’ ‘The message is that we shouldn’t be guided by sectarianism based on ethnics or place of origin and to know that we are all Rwandans.’

All in all, the focus is exclusively on narrating de-ethnicisation even though, as increasing number of studies show, ethnicity is not what *primarily* motivated people to kill (Straus 2006; Fujii 2009).

From the viewpoint of unity-building, other important messages are those concerning Rwandanness (patriotism) and Rwandanity (specific cultural values making a Rwandan, to be discussed under ‘gitaramo’). All official *ingando* civic education schedules include lectures on patriotism. Among other things, in *ingando* we ‘learn how to like our country in our hearts,’ ‘the culture of liking our country, how you have to do everything good for your country.’ ‘Patriotism means love of country, for example if someone attacks, [we] are ready to combat.’ ‘We are there to be taught a sense of patriotism, to defend the country if possible... that is why a little military practice [is included].’ ‘That is the essence of military training,’ the administrator of Muhazi camp explains, ‘military training installs patriotism in people.’<sup>54</sup> *Ingando* songs reflect this patriotic zeal. A song sung at Nkumba and entitled ‘I will protect your frontier Rwanda’ has the following lyrics: ‘What will I do to protect? I will stand by on your frontier Rwanda; I will watch all persons that come toward you; I will let in those who carry a peace basket of unity and reconciliation; I will prevent from coming those who carry anything else till I convince them; Rwanda I love you.’

### Igitaramo

All *ingando* include an evening gathering of song and dance called *igitaramo* or *utemaduni*. When *igitaramo* starts it is already dark. In Nkumba, hundreds of students are seated in rows on a grass clearing, girls on the left, boys on the right. Everyone is singing and clapping to the fast rhythm of the song. The soldiers who run the camp are walking in between the long rows with a wooden stick, also singing. A guy is running in half-squat along the rows of kids, urging them on with his outstretched hands and high-pitched ululations to step up the energy of the song. The more intense the song gets, more ululations emanate from the crowd. Up front, there is a small group of drummers and dancers. There are different types of dance performed — *kinimba*, *komedi*, *gushirimba*. Two guys are dancing with whistles in their mouth and hands spread wide above their head imitating the horns of the Nyankole cattle. At some points there is tugging at the jackets to symbolise milking of a cow. The ‘cow dance’ is called *guhamiriza* for boys and *gushayaya* for girls.

*Why is gitaramo included?* Clearly, the more salient reason is for students to re-learn ‘Rwandan culture.’ Gitaramo is included because ‘it is the Rwandan culture. [In the past it used to happen] for the king or other leaders, they [would] tell stories, sing, provide entertainment.’ Another reason is the sense of unity produced by a mass of bodies joined in song, joined by a single rhythm, movement, utterance. ‘In Rwandan culture, when we sing that means we are one.’ There are others who explain *gitaramo* simply as ‘entertainment.’ Though different people highlighted different aspects of the get-together, it seems to be simultaneously all of them.

Though *gitaramo* connects to the pre-colonial dynastic tradition of learning ‘high culture’ by the chosen groups of *itorero* (Bale 2002: 37), the contents of the songs clearly reveal that the contemporary nation-/unity-building agenda is being served first and foremost. The refrain of one of the Nkumba songs goes as follows: ‘I will protect your frontier Rwanda, will stand by all persons that come towards you, I will let come those that carry a peace basket of unity and reconciliation. [...]’ Another song from Nkumba

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<sup>54</sup> Interview with Muhazi camp coordinator, op.cit.

espouses a similar message: 'The real man is the one who fulfils the duties that he has been mandated; we support unity and reconciliation, even those boys want it, we support unity and reconciliation. [...]' A song from *ingando* for released prisoners (reproduced in Cacioppo 2005: 10) again promotes a very programmatic message: 'This is what we want: unity, reconciliation, brotherhood, and peace [...]' This is the time for guaranteed peace and the time for joy — Whoever does not want to unite should be removed from amongst us. This is the time for joy — Whoever does not want *gacaca* should be removed from amongst us. This is the time for joy — Whoever is not happy should be removed from amongst us. [...]'.

The main goal of *Ingando*: What are the camps 'all about'?

In most of my interviews and questionnaires (with participants, organisers but also beyond), the following question has been included: 'According to you, what is the main objective of *ingando*?' In what follows, I want to reflect on the whole body of responses: Is the main aim unity building? Or else, what is 'unity-building' according to these responses? Is there agreement on what the main objective is or are the responses varied?

Analysis yields convergence as one of the key themes. The notion of bringing people 'to accord' or 'on the same line' appears repeatedly. Convergence is unity, and unity-as-convergence is the end-point of the process of reconciliation. Nation-building is thus also convergence: 'How to construct a nation, that is *ingando*...[and] one needs a consensus to make a nation [emphasis added].'<sup>55</sup> One such key consensus is the story of the past. The main objective of *ingando* is 'to have the same ideas about history of our country.'<sup>56</sup> The revisited and officialised historical narrative is indeed the centrepiece of all *ingando*. Though many regard it as the 'true' or 'real' history, this official historical narrative is more functional than objective. 'Convergent,' however, should not be equated with 'consensual.' The narrative has not been arrived at through a continual discussion and is not open to public critique or rejection.

Many people, especially adults, are sensitive to the fact that they are being 're-taught' history and that there is a specific group of people who authored it. "They teach us history, though we know it, they tell us what happened though we know it," a female university student tells me. While waiting at the road-side crossing of *Kabuga wa Musha* in the Eastern province, an unemployed bespectacled teacher, currently 'begging for a job,' approached me and we talked. The teacher fled with masses of other Hutu to Congo. Back in Rwanda, after years of work, *gacaca* accused him and he was imprisoned. After seven years he was released because "they realised I was innocent." He attended returnee *ingando* in Nyagasambu in 1997 and described it in the following way: "What can you teach me on top of what I know? What do you want to teach me about co-habitation, I know how to coexist, I know my history...These people [teaching me] who have come *after* I even left my country."<sup>57</sup>

The history inspires distrust and cynicism for the same reason that the entire NURC unity and reconciliation project inspires it — coexistence and love among all Rwandans is being narrated, implemented and overseen by a group overwhelmingly constituted by old-caseload Tutsi returnees from Uganda. Similarly, the problem seems to be not primarily with the content, the 'what' of lessons, but with 'who' teaches and in what context. The main problem is that re-education is organised by people with a particular

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<sup>55</sup> Interview with the RPF Communications Adviser, Kigali, 23 March 2009.

<sup>56</sup> Interview with a researcher at the Office of the Ombudsman, 14 January 2009.

<sup>57</sup> *Kabuga wa Musha*, 28 January 2009.

political agenda that then translates into the lessons.

As we have seen, the theme of convergence comes out prominently from the participant responses. Convergence is even painted as the desired outcome of a reconciliatory process that *ingando* is meant to foster: 'People cannot be reconciled if they have not talked together...[In *ingando*] people sit together, sort differences, *see things in the same way* [emphasis added].'<sup>58</sup> Students need '*one way of looking at things*, especially government policy.'<sup>59</sup> *Ingando* is there, after all, to teach participants how 'to defend the country and the policy of the country.'<sup>60</sup> The love of nation is conflated with the allegiance to policies of the government.

This brings us to another important theme — politicisation. People working in the non-governmental sector compare *ingando* with other 'unity and reconciliation' activities saying '*ingando* is different, it is more political.'<sup>61</sup> *Ingando* are indeed fundamentally political, not only because i) politics and specific policies are being taught ('in *ingando* the government makes its programme being known'), or because ii) convergence and 'defence' of policies ushers support to ruling party, thus solidifying its grasp on power; but also because iii) the state takes a keen interest in these specific groups and their 'forming,' re-working, essentially their wholesale transformation, into an 'ideal citizen.'

Interestingly, the transformation process makes *lavage de cerveau* (brainwashing) an ambiguous term in Rwanda. As we have seen, transformation indeed accentuates changing thought, 'taking out' the bad mentalities and 'replacing them' by good ideas and attitudes. But while some use the term *lavage* to automatically dismiss *ingando*, others see the same process as an intended and necessary cleansing: '*Ingando* [was intended] for all people [...] as some kind of *cleansing of people's minds from this dirt* accumulated by situations and recent history' [emphasis added].<sup>62</sup>

It is with this in mind that we have to consider the military aspect of *ingando*. There are some organisers and participants who tag *ingando* as 'military practice.' Just before entering Nkumba camp on one of my visits, the camp 'facilitator' turns to me and asks: 'Why are you interested in this activity? Why *ingando*? Do you not have *military training* like this in your country?' [emphasis added]. In a fully packed Nyamirambo bus winding its way among pot holes, a third year NUR statistics student and a drop-out of *ingando* asks me what I think of my *ingando* visits. "Interesting," I say evasively, trying not to predetermine her response. "Interesting? They are bad!" she exclaims, "It is military camps more than anything, they lie to you!"

While it is true that Nkumba *ingando* and *itorero* incorporate military training and that the whole camp is organised in a military manner stressing discipline, hierarchy, response to authority and homogeneity, and while it is also true that no official description of *ingando* mentions militariness but rather promotes *ingando* as unity and reconciliation seminars, to simply conclude that *ingando* are 'military training camps' is to miss the bigger picture. Such conclusion overlooks the political, and within it the transformative and the conformative that is essential to governmentality. Today, the Rwandan government uses the space of *ingando* primarily to effectuate a transformation — to create what they call a 'citizen,' but which in effect is an ideal development 'subject.' While this project applies to other activities of unity and reconciliation as well, *ingando*'s spatial and performative aspects (discussed next) make it distinct.

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<sup>58</sup> Interview with the Muhazi *ingando* coordinator, 28 January 2009.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Interview with the Peace-Building and Reconciliation Project Manager at OXFAM Rwanda, 30 October 2008.

<sup>62</sup> Interview with the Director of the Language Center, KIST, 10 March 2009.



## Summary

Briefly, what does the analysis of *ingando*'s components and overall goals show us? How do we reconcile the discourses of unity-building with discourses and activities of reorienting, defence and convergence? Perhaps we can say that unity in the government's imagination includes re-orienting away from certain attitudes and beliefs, as well as creating a convergence of knowledge and opinion, and adoption of consensus on key topics such as history and government policy. *Ingando* are mass sensitisation, education, and re-education centres aimed to transmit not only various types of information, but 'consensuses' on key issues. The RPF believes it has created the contours of a 'New Rwanda;' now it needs to transmit the attitudes, behaviours and knowledges that underlie it. As we have seen, this aspect of cleansing and consensus formation through sensitisation is common to all *ingando* even if their target groups are extremely different.

The unity-building in *ingando* draws on militariness (its accent on oppositional identity, homogeneity and 'oneness'), patriotism and the (re)learning of Rwandanity. Unity-building, militariness and politicisation are key aspects that cannot be considered in separation. *Ingando* is meant to show its participant that 'defending your country is your primary role, defending the policy of your country is your primary role.'<sup>63</sup> This points again to the 'unicity' or totality of the state and its project: one does not only learn about policies and activities that cross various thematic boundaries, one also needs to be convergent on these important points. Unity means coming together not only to defend the contours of physical space and the abstract notion of a nation that draws them, but of more technical policies and the narratives and broader discourses that underpin them.

## 7 Effects of *Ingando* camps

Can *ingando* transform a person or a group of people? Can it change social relations? In what sense is *ingando* 'powerful'? The present chapter is an inquiry into *ingando*'s effects. First, the chapter explores the desired effects — the effects one would expect from a unity and reconciliation activity. The rest of the chapter then focuses on actual effects arising from i) the spatial and performative nature of the camps; and ii) the wider political contexts. It is these broader conjectures (rather than just what is taught and done) that help us fully understand *ingando*. *Ingando* is not just a 'school' but is meant to be a more wholesome transformatory experience. Based on the analysis, and combining *ingando*'s two salient features – separation and transition – the chapter will theorise the camp as a total institution and a collective rite of passage to the rules, roles/citizen scripts and ideologies of RPF-led Rwanda.

The expected effects: Reconciliation, unity, peace and solidarity

How do we study *ingando*'s desired or 'character-mandated'<sup>64</sup> effects? Is this even possible? The government produces politically-expedient upbeat assessments with little grounding in rigorous factual analysis. Participants and non-participant observers operate within a repressive political system that affects how they can 'judge' a government-sponsored activity, and within a society ripe with rumour and distrust.

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<sup>63</sup> Interview with the Muhazi *ingando* coordinator, op.cit.

<sup>64</sup> Namely, the 'unity and reconciliation' activity should produce 'unity and reconciliation.'

Critique might be scarce, but does this mean all are ‘indoctrinated’? The politics of voice in contemporary Rwanda have to be used to interpret and contextualise announced ‘results.’

“The ordinary citizen generally accepts the existence of *ingando* as an important and possibly even crucial element in the reconciliation and peace relationship process,” writes the author of a government-sponsored *ingando* impact assessment (1996-2006), the only formal appraisal available, with largely unreliable results.<sup>65</sup> The author goes on to suggest that “even though one can not yet form any conclusions [on] whether *ingando* is effective to unity and reconciliation or not, *since not sufficient empirical studies have been conducted*, it is already possible to make predictions on its effectiveness” [emphasis added]. Unsubstantiated predictions and assertions are part of the official discourse: NURC’s Director of Peace Building and Conflict Management proclaims that *ingando* “help Rwandans to become good citizens” (GYC 2008: 10). “According to NURC’s Communications Officer, the programme has been *instrumental* in changing the mindset of the youth... Indications [undetailed] show that *ingando* has had a very big impact on the young people” (Kwizera for NTK, 2 August 2009; emphasis added).

In Mutobo and TIG *ingando* for ex-combatants and released prisoners, respectively, I have included the following question in the questionnaire: ‘*Can ingando change a person? How?*’ Without fail, every answer to this politically sensitive question has been affirmative. *Ingando* changes a person in ‘thinking and action,’ ‘because of the courses given’ that if you follow ‘you are changed automatically.’ Ideas of past are ‘removed,’ *ingando* helps people ‘correct themselves,’ and learn a ‘new way of living,’ how to live with neighbours, how to ‘live with the one we have wronged.’ The Mutobo answers were relatively more elaborate and often mentioned learning the ‘truth’ of things in *ingando*. TIG answers were curt, there were some blank responses, and one TIGiste mentioned change is possible ‘if you follow the orders.’

Interviews with student participants proved more iterative and responses more diverse. Even though the majority of respondents avoided criticism and highlighted the positive effects of *ingando*, critical and sceptical views have been expressed as well. Lengthier and slightly more critical responses might have resulted partly from the different form of data collection employed (semi-structured interviews) and the space where data collection took place. Interviews were conducted in a less controlled environment — outside *ingando* and on a one-on-one basis. Furthermore, the price of dissent is not the same across the whole population. In Rwanda (and perhaps elsewhere), the rule is that the closer to power, the more openly one can speak one’s mind (i.e. those most unafraid to twist or even contradict official scripts were officials of the party and/or government).

On the other hand, the already-mentioned political ambiance (i.e. you cannot say whatever is on your mind and hence do not get an idea of the opinions of ‘dissenters’) and ‘self-selection’ biases result in a greater positive response than would have resulted from a ‘perfect sample.’ First, a perfect sample would result if all people were free to speak their mind and if those chosen to participate were not tempering their criticism as a result of indirect co-optations (as might be the case with, for example, university

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<sup>65</sup> Different *ingando* participants were chosen, samples carefully balanced, and yet the overly positive responses to questions do not necessarily reflect true opinion but rather carefulness. Also, reported findings have a positive slant but are fundamentally vague: “According to a significant number of respondents (93%), *ingando* enhance the ability of the *ingando* beneficiaries to take control and act in their own best interest relating to the collective or national concerns” (p.52). Or “Many people consider *ingando* as the most appropriate answer to the identity crisis of the Rwandans as well as the most effective strategy of achieving the ideal of unity and reconciliation” (p.61).



students posturing as the future elite). Second, a perfect sample would result only if everyone who was meant to indeed underwent *ingando* (including the 'dodgers,' 'leavers' and 'objectors' such as the Jehovah's Witnesses who avoid it precisely because they disagree). Finally, a perfect sample would result only if all students approached agreed to participate (again, those disagreeing with *ingando* might not want to talk).

My analysis is based either on answers to explicit questions such as '*Can ingando help reconciliation?*' or '*Ingando are called solidarity camps. Do you think the camps can build solidarity?*' or on unsolicited narratives addressing 'change.' One student suggested that *ingando* is "more powerful than *gacaca*, because in *ingando*, people [are] aware of being trained, in *gacaca* [there is] no training... in *gacaca* you are [only] punished." Change means mostly change in 'understanding' (changing ideology, learning the truth, etc). 'If you know the bad of something, you can't do it.' A number of student participants relate change to the 'understanding' that ethnicity does not exist or is not important. The government apparently attempts to create an ethnically-blind cohort and seems successful at it, even if just at the surface level. Such behaviour is still useful in terms of governmentality and might be rewarded:

- *'When you come back [home from ingando], you already know Hutu, Tutsi, the history, it is meaningless. We try to consider it as nonsense ideas.'*
- *'Of course [ingando builds solidarity]. Before entering ingando, I was in obscurity. The authorities come [to the camp] and give you a lot of information. Now I know how to live with others [because] I have already socialised with other Rwandans [in ingando]. In our generation, there is no more Hutu, Tutsi, Twa.'*
- *'We are different students there, some are Hutu, some are Tutsi, but after being enlightened [we realise] it is not us, but our fathers [who] put a hand [to the genocide]....there is not reason why we should not feel united.'*
- *'It changes people... it [ingando] helps you everywhere you are going, not to be frightened by different people, different ethnics, you go back to that experience.'*

Others refer to genocide ideology: '*Ingando* has changed me and others, before [there was] genocide ideology, they teach us to fight it....it has diminished the ideology.' Or: '*Ingando* changes people. Some go *laver la tête* completely [with regard to] this ideology.' 'For me, I don't see profit of genocide...even me, who has family who participated...we both [are] suffering because of genocide, why don't we fight against genocide ideology... how are you a cockroach... we look [the] same, we have the same blood, I see you as me and you see me as you.' Convergence in understanding is itself believed to be a contribution to unity and reconciliation. 'Before, they [the students] know different things, [which] prevents reconciliation. After [*ingando*] they know one thing in the same sense.'

Those more sceptical and critical suggest that *ingando* is limited in some way (as regards time span, temporary effects, limited target groups, etc.) or point to wider social problems that undermine the work of *ingando*. The time spent in *ingando* has been narrowed progressively from three months to three or even two weeks. As a result, 'we cannot go in depth,' 'it depends on the person [whether some solidarity is developed], we spend only little time there.' 'Three weeks are not sufficient for someone to change, for solidarity or reconciliation.' The target group needs to be expanded: 'They train us only intellectuals; they should go to the countryside as well.' 'Another matter [are] the parents...Local authorities try to teach them after *umuganda*, about the different activities of government, but we don't know what they are teaching each other at home. If possible, they should bring parents [to *ingando*].' 'TIGistes, [after *ingando*] when they return to society [...] the problem [is] the society is not mobilised to give them a second chance... but the released [themselves], I know they are fine, [they] had time to think and ask for pardon.' Others suggest *ingando* is only a preliminary measure: 'For now, yes [it

works]... but still another tool [is needed] in the future; this is the first step.' 'We are looking for more effective strategies, but this is for now.'

Some students insinuate direct disagreement with aspects of *ingando* or *ingando* as a whole: 'Some people are not happy about it [*ingando*, saying] it is just to teach about this government, small small portion [of the participants], [they say] it is to promote FPR [RPF] line. [Well], *it is* to promote their line, but that is good!' Or '[Does *ingando* help reconciliation?]' Not at all, we did not do assessment that people who have genocide ideology have changed. I don't think so; even if you leave [*ingando*] and come here [university], there is still genocide ideology present.' Another student suggested, 'I don't think that [*ingando* creates reconciliation]. You can show people that you agree, but in your head you think another thing... You cannot tell it because otherwise you will be imprisoned.'

Open disagreement does surface, however, when certain sensitive topics such as religion are touched. During a controversial *ingando* lecture promoting materialism, there were strong murmurs and songs of protest in the classroom. In such rare situations of collective upheaval, students use the word 'brainwashing' indignantly and against the government ('[Me:] Why is he teaching all this?' 'They want to brainwash us!'). One student suggested through lectures such as these, *ingando* does negative work: 'In the philosophy [lesson], they were telling us God does not exist...they are somehow teaching us to kill each other! They should teach that God loves all of us, Hutu, Tutsi, Twa, we are all children of God.' In other words, much broader issues (*Who comes to teach and how are they perceived? Can a short and narrowly-targeted programme of conviviality transform deeply-affected social relations at large?*) determine the prospects of *ingando* but these cannot be solved inside that space and experience.

The most lasting effect of *ingando* seems to be the friendships it creates: 'Youth from all corners of country, they all meet at that particular place, so when they meet they create friendship; during *ingando*, in those exchanges, a sense of unity, togetherness is created.' 'People do change, even when we come here [to university after *ingando*], we are like a family.'<sup>66</sup> All retreats, camps and other closed communities where people 'undergo' things together ('you have been through bad things, tortured together') and spend time socialising produce gregariousness and camaraderie. The group shares these intense experiences with no one else, and can return to them together (a circle of memory). In other words, the one pronounced effect of *ingando* seems to be the strengthened sense of groupness among these specific people, who become a cohort of sorts. However, whether this sense of friendship truly runs across all divisions is a question that faces all the methodological obstacles mentioned above.

*Finally, how do the non-participants see change in participants?* An employee of a local association gives an optimistic assessment:

*People returning from the DRC [ex-combatants], who were in ingando, they are 'a cadre' in society, they are not those who will cause trouble, sometimes [they are even] the good examples... They behave as people integrated, there was worry they would be source of insecurity, but they weren't, and it is because they went through ingando.*<sup>67</sup>

Two quite conflicting views exist on the effects of student *ingando*, reflecting the polarised political environment. In one view, '*ingando* creates thirst for such [positive economic, cultural and political] frameworks [...], participants multiply prayer groups, public meetings....because they now have that thirst, that desire for rebuilding.' An IRDP researcher views post-*ingando* students in a very different light:

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<sup>66</sup> These are just two excerpts; there were at least five others who explicitly highlighted friendship as the most lasting effect of *ingando*.

<sup>67</sup> Interview with the Legal Department Officer at Haguruka, Kigali, 20 January 2009.

*When these kids go through ingando, something happens, there is a feeling of fear [in them], they are only afraid of the challenges, of history, [they] know only of government's programme. That is why I hate them [ingando], I never went to visit one, but I can see the outcomes. There are no demands, they demand nothing, there are no demonstrations, no strikes at universities, I keep thinking this must be the result of ingando. Another result, and you cannot observe it because you are not Rwandan, if you meet former soldiers, prisoners, former ingando trainees, even in family context, and you start to criticise or to have contradictory opinions, they just laugh a little and say nothing, whether Hutu or Tutsi it does not matter, nothing, no opinion.*<sup>68</sup>

These perceptions show that what for one is a welcome zeal to 'rebuild' and a necessary alignment in ideology, is for another a sign of taming, docility and 'indoctrination.'<sup>69</sup> No matter the conflicting views, there is a common axis: Non-participants evaluated *ingando* against concepts such as 'integration,' 'security,' 'critique,' 'opinion' or 'thirst to reconstruct.' There was no mention of 'unity,' 'solidarity' and 'reconciliation' or even 'friendship.' *Ingando's* effects thus can be seen from a different angle, a much more politicised one. *Ingando* can be seen as a key tool in, and a microcosm of, the wider political project of governmentality and social engineering. The rest of the chapter is thus dedicated to exploring *ingando's* effects in this sphere.

A crucial ingredient: The spatial, symbolic and performative nature of *Ingando*

As mentioned, *ingando* is about transition and transformation. *But why is 'camping' chosen? Why this particular form of experience? What are the effects of camping that other forms of 'schooling' cannot achieve?* These questions require a broader inquiry into the spatial and performative nature of *ingando*. Having covered 'contents' (activities, lessons, and their meanings) in the past chapter, the analysis turns now to contexts — to spaces and 'being' in a place with others. As will be shown, the experience of camping is itself supposed to do 'desired work.' It is not just what participants learn in class, singing sessions, or military parades, but where, with whom and how these take place.

A camp: Separation and concentration

*Ingando's* participants are 'distanced' from the outside in different ways. The camp is a bounded space in a remote location. For the incoming group, the place is 'far away from home.'<sup>70</sup> Participants are not familiar with the surroundings, the people ('you go with people you don't even know'<sup>71</sup>) or the style of life. Altogether, people are 'out of their element.' The attempt is to create a total separation from the 'outside' and from the 'before.'

Remoteness assures a lack of 'distractions' and 'concentration on the goal.'<sup>72</sup> It creates the possibility of undivided attention ('outside the camp everyone is in his business, there we concentrate'). A good example is the *ingando* for ex-combatants, located about ten kilometres off the paved road at one of the multiple crevices of Lake Muhazi. The administrator explains the significance of the location: "It is to avoid distraction. If the camp [was] at the side of the road, then we are trying to give them one direction, and the

<sup>68</sup> Interview with an IRDP researcher, 21 January 2009.

<sup>69</sup> Use of these labels can be strategic too: they are known to upset the Western mind, bringing indignation, and that effect is desirable not necessarily because of adherence to liberal political ideals but because it will reflect badly on the government, possibly undermining it.

<sup>70</sup> Interview with the Executive Secretary of the East Rwanda Association of the Adventist Church, Nyamirambo, Kigali, 21 January 2009.

<sup>71</sup> Interview with a student *ingando* participant, Butare, 3 February 2009.

<sup>72</sup> Interview with *ingando* participant and ex-President of national SCUR Forum, 14 January 2009.

outside is pulling them in different directions. We are trying to create a circle, we are trying to settle their mind.” An Adventist church functionary also suggests that in the camps “participants are protected from the bad influences from the parents because they are far.”<sup>73</sup>

‘Concentration’ is key in yet another sense — a camp is a concentration of people. This has two governance functions. First, it is logistically easier to sensitise people *en masse* (‘it becomes easier for many people to know many things in the same place’).<sup>74</sup> It is also the most expedient way to separate out a social segment for tailored sensitisation (‘you have to bring them together to shape their mind’).<sup>75</sup> Second, *ingando* that mix different social segments (perpetrators, victims, returnees, etc.) are meant to serve as ‘laboratories of coexistence.’ ‘You cannot reconcile people if they are not together [in direct contact]’<sup>76</sup>; ‘if people have not talked together.’<sup>77</sup> But since *ingando* are not spontaneous but orchestrated concentrations, they constitute ‘simulated communalities.’ Participants nonetheless have to communicate and interact. *Ingando* forces them to ‘be together’ in the most extreme sense — to live together in close proximity, sharing aspects of life normally shared only within the family context (for example, dining, hygiene, sleeping quarters). Finally, concentration is key from the viewpoint of content. *Ingando* has a tight schedule packed with activities and lessons; it is meant to be *une école accélérée*,<sup>78</sup> an intensive course.

The proximity and face-to-face contact that *ingando* creates are believed to be significant from the viewpoint of transformation. In general (relevant to all sensitisation activities), the belief is that ‘the message gets in better when they can see you [see the speaker].’<sup>79</sup> Further, singing and dancing are believed to create mutual confidence and openness. On my visit to the TIG camp, an administrator called for an *igitaramo* session — ‘you will sing and dance a little with them, this will motivate them, this will open them to you, after that you can ask them anything and they will do it.’

Though dancing, singing, chatting and ‘experiencing together’ have undoubtedly the potential to create fraternity (however durable or fleeting it is), the challenge might be precisely to extend that potential across the divisions that today are most pervasive (for example, the *TIGistes* within the camp might grow friendly with each other but this serves as no assurance that relations between perpetrators and victims are similarly affected). There might be important limits to ‘building bridges’ through song and dance. ‘When you dance with them [normally] they open up, so [before asking questions] at Mutobo *ingando*, we tried that but it didn’t work... they [the ex-combatants] have strategic information... [these men] they looked at us as if we were from a different world.’<sup>80</sup>

## Internal structure: Order and hierarchy

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<sup>73</sup> Interview with the Executive Secretary of the East Rwanda Association of the Adventist Church, op.cit.

<sup>74</sup> Coordinator of Muhazi *ingando* for child ex-combatants, 28 January 2009.

<sup>75</sup> Interview with a Nkumba participant at NUR, Butare, 2 February 2009.

<sup>76</sup> Interview with a student *ingando* participant, Butare, 5 February 2009.

<sup>77</sup> Coordinator of the Muhazi *ingando* for child ex-combatants, talking about *ingando* in general, op.cit.

<sup>78</sup> Interview with RPF Communications Adviser, 23 March 2009.

<sup>79</sup> An executive at the Ruhengeri prison referring to NURC’s presentation during Unity and Reconciliation Week, 19 November 2008.

<sup>80</sup> Interview with a civil servant after his visit to Mutobo with a delegation from Northern Uganda (seeking inspiration for activities for the conflict-affected northern regions), 12 March 2009.

Inside the camp, both physical space and time are highly structured, reflecting the importance of order and rules, hierarchies and authority. Every camp has a detailed time schedule that breaks down the day almost by the hour. Most *ingando* also assure order and indirect control by organising participants in a military way, dividing them into companies<sup>81</sup>, platoons and sections, with leaders called *kapita*. The camp is carefully divided into administrative quarters, dorms for participants, a common dining area, a clearing for physical exercises or other types of gathering, and a centrally-located spacious amphitheatre, in some cases called a ‘pentagon’ (sometimes made in the form of the pentagon) or *l’école* where participants gather for classes and evening *igitaramo*.

The ‘pentagon’ of the TIG camp is an impressive feat of makeshift wooden architecture — a round enclosed arena with a rising scaffolding of benches, in front of which rises a balcony, a pulpit really, where the administrators and teachers deliver their lessons and oversee the evening *igitaramo*. Even in the tented Adventist *ingando* lost among the hills of the Akagera park, space is carefully ordered. An improvised wooden revolving door gives way to the area of the ‘political headquarters’ (administrators’ area) with the main tent referred to as the ‘White House.’ In front of a large clearing rises a wooden tribune where the administrators or invited speakers deliver their message.

The centrality of the lecture theatre in the spatial order further underlines the centrality of the transformation project itself. The function of order as such is ‘that it makes it easier for the government to come and teach.’<sup>82</sup> Order is directly linked to governmentality objectives: order eases surveillance and increases control. Space and time are disciplined as must be the ‘being in them’ of participants. Lack of discipline, after all, is listed by NURC’s Director of Civic Education in her *ingando* speech as one of the reasons of genocide.<sup>83</sup>

#### Enaction: Experiencing through simulation

Enacting certain roles and experiencing certain scenarios is meant to be educative and transformative. ‘[It is] one thing to be told you are Rwandan, that it is more important than other identities, but another thing to feel it, to identify with that larger group.’<sup>84</sup> ‘In general, we want actions rather than words, [we want] change by doing.’<sup>85</sup> Two to three different simulations overlap in *ingando* (depending on which *ingando* we focus on) and create specific ‘unities’: i) simulation of RPF military life during the war; ii) simulation of a community where interactions among people and experiencing ‘side by side’ take place; and iii) simulation of a collective rite of passage through certain activities of separation and transition.

During the *ingando* lunch break, seated at the back of the communal kitchen and working at a dish of beans, corn and rice, a participant (and my translator) excitedly shares his observations: ‘They want us to go through what the soldiers went through, the training, the food, this is what RPF soldiers used to eat during the war.’<sup>86</sup> As previously mentioned, the military format draws on and produces specific enactments of unity — us versus the other, uniformity, oneness. Let me focus in greater depth on the latter two. Sameness, or uniformity, is a salient theme in *ingando* — the camps try to create an almost hyperbolic experience, an absolute erasure of differential treatment. Both organisers and students repeatedly highlight sameness as the core unity-producing strategy. Uniformity at the most literal level starts with wearing a uniform (in Nkumba, Gato and in *itorero*, this is military uniform; in TIG, it is a work uniform). More generally,

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<sup>81</sup> For example, TIG has four companies: ‘AC,’ ‘BC,’ ‘CC’ and ‘DC.’

<sup>82</sup> Interview with a Nkumba *ingando* participant, Butare, 4 February 2009.

<sup>83</sup> Visit to Kageyo *ingando* at the Tanzania border, 12 November 2008.

<sup>84</sup> Interview with the ‘Professional for Good Governance,’ MINALOC, 12 March 2009.

<sup>85</sup> Interview with Director of Programmes at the Rwanda National Youth Council, op.cit.

<sup>86</sup> Visit to Nkumba *ingando*, 16 December 2008.



*ingando* produces a ‘uniform experience.’ An excited participant recounts: “We woke up at the same time, we ran together, our beds were made the same way, we wore the same clothes, we clapped the same way, and we marched together, we were *umoja* [unity].”<sup>87</sup> A similar observation: “We do the same things, drink the same thing, eat the same thing, we sit and we share.”<sup>88</sup> “Why do they eat beans and corn in *ingando*?” I ask Florence. “It is to show that you and me... we are at the same level, [there is] no difference, you might be rich and me poor but we eat the same thing, we are one people.”<sup>89</sup> Especially in difficult situations, there can be no differentiation: “If a case arises of survival, of struggling, you all are supposed to [put your part]...they [the *ingando* administrators] find some [puddles] of water in the lot and we all go inside, we wallow in it like pigs,<sup>90</sup> [to show that] you and me, we are one.”<sup>91</sup>

Besides uniformity with its emphasis on equal treatment, *ingando* utilises strategies that create a sense of oneness — of being an inseparable part of a larger unit, which itself is constituted as compact. Observation and interviews reveal three strategies: collective punishment, body coordination, and the rallying call. ‘If someone makes a mistake, everyone is punished, there is a kind of connection in that.’<sup>92</sup> ‘Everything you do it as a team. If someone does a fault [makes a mistake], they punish you as one, because you are one. For example, they shout ‘all of you down!’ even if only one person does something wrong.’<sup>93</sup> Military parades also enact such sense of oneness. The very movement of bodies and limbs in coordination makes an individual part of a greater unit, not only of a physical regiment but also (even if only by a figurative extension) of an intangible idea, a larger imagined community. Coordination deploys the physical to help experience the intangible. Finally, all *ingando* utilise the rallying call, which is perhaps the most ‘concentrated’ act in terms of combining different performative strategies of unity. The Nkumba call and reply (*kos! > umoja!*) is the best example. Not only does the reply involve saying ‘unity’ (*umoja!*), but all have to respond in the same way (uniformity) and in unison (oneness).

## 8 *Ingando*’s wider conjectures: Power, state, and governmentality

### *Ingando* as a total institution

The spatial and performative analysis above suggests that *ingando* is a ‘total institution’ (Goffman 1957). A ‘total institution’ (or if relevant to the whole state, a ‘totalitarian system’) encompasses person’s ‘whole being.’ The total character is ‘symbolised by the barrier to social intercourse with the outside.’ *Ingando*<sup>94</sup> fulfils all ‘totalistic features’ listed by Goffman (1957: 2) — i) all aspects of life are conducted in the same place and under the same single authority; ii) each phase of the member’s activity is carried out in the immediate company of a large number of others, all of whom are treated alike and required to do the same thing together; iii) all phases of the day’s activities are tightly

<sup>87</sup> Interview with Nkumba *ingando* participant, Butare, 5 February 2009.

<sup>88</sup> A student at NUR reflecting on *ingando* experience, Butare, 5 February 2009.

<sup>89</sup> Informal discussion with a NURC intern, 19 December 2008.

<sup>90</sup> This punishment is known as *kwiviringita*.

<sup>91</sup> Interview with a Nkumba *ingando* participant, Butare, 5 February 2009.

<sup>92</sup> Interview with a Nkumba *ingando* participant, Butare, 6 February 2009.

<sup>93</sup> Interview with a Nkumba *ingando* participant, Butare, 4 February 2009.

<sup>94</sup> Goffman does not mention camping retreats in his grouping of total institutions (interestingly, he mentions a more restricted category of ‘retreats from the world or training stations of the religious’) though he does state that his list is not exhaustive.

scheduled, with one activity leading at a prearranged time into the next, the whole circle of activities being imposed from above through a system of explicit formal rulings and a body of officials; and, finally, iv) the contents of the various enforced activities are brought together as parts of a single overall rational plan purportedly designed to fulfil the official aims of the institution.

In such settings, “the central relationship is not guidance or periodic checking [...] but *surveillance* — a *seeing to it* that everyone does what he has been clearly told [...] and this under conditions where one person’s infraction is likely to stand out in relief against the visible, constantly examined, compliance of the others” [emphasis added] (Goffman 1957: 2). Indeed, while the camp itself is hidden to the outside, inside the camp, there is perfect oversight: the space is small, and all follow the same schedule and all wear uniform. Individuality is lost to the ‘block’ management of people (ibid). In a TIG camp, a table on a blackboard offers the ‘daily counts’ — it is literally divided into ‘blocks’ and represents a schematic symbol of oversight — *abahari* (those present), *abakore* (those working), *abarwaye* (those sick), etc.

“There are reasons for being interested in [total institutions] [...] These establishments are forcing houses for *changing persons in our society*. Each is a natural experiment, typically harsh, on what can be done to the self” (Goffman 1957: 4). Indeed, *ingando* are social experiments, manipulable worlds. For now, we can see that separation, size and internal order aids surveillance, which further aids order and that together allow greater legibility, control and, ultimately, manipulation. But *ingando* camps are also about experience — they are a separation from the mundane and familiar, an intense experience of full immersion without respite, they involve the enactment of new roles, a breaking down of barriers, and interaction with new people.

The king and his castle at *Lake Muhazi*: Sovereignty and indirect control in a simulated social world  
The Lake Muhazi *ingando* for child ex-combatants is an example of a particularly intense total institution. Though the centre comprises only one administrator and 56 boys (aged 14-18 years), the intricate social organisation within the camp is striking. The administrative divisions, information networks and surveillance, as well as the attempt to ‘transform behaviour’ are a concentrated reflection on key aspects of the Rwandan state. The camp is also an interesting political entity — a simulated sovereign world unto itself, a pseudo-polity fitted with administrative, political and judicial ‘systems’ but where power is concentrated in the hands of one man.<sup>95</sup>

A number of aspects help explain why this particular *ingando* is so intense. Not only are these ‘children’ who are thought to be ‘malleable’ and the ‘nation of tomorrow’,<sup>96</sup> there are also different types of transitions that they have to undergo. The participants grew up or spent a number of years living with an armed group;<sup>97</sup> they need to be ‘corrected’ and get accustomed to ‘civilian life’ (‘We help them in terms of behavioural change because in DRC they adapted to behaviours that are not good, now they need to be reintegrated to society’).<sup>98</sup> Many never lived with a family, yet in Rwanda the aim is to reunite them with close or distant relatives (they are ‘not familiar with activities commonly carried out at home, such as fetching water, firewood, helping with the young ones, they do not know the duties, the roles of the child’).<sup>99</sup> Many children have also spent all or most of their life abroad so they need to be updated on the rules and

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<sup>95</sup> [Me:] “How many people work here?” “I am a manager but also a social worker, it is basically me.”

<sup>96</sup> Interview with the Muhazi *ingando* coordinator, 28 January 2009.

<sup>97</sup> Most come from the FDLR, but also Mai Mai, RCD Goma, Mongoli, RDD and ‘other.’

<sup>98</sup> Interview with the Muhazi *ingando* coordinator, op.cit.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.



ideologies of the post-genocide government (one of the main goals is 'to give them a clear picture of their country'). The length of time spent in *ingando* adds to the intensity. On average, a child ex-combatant spends months in the camp; this, however, depends on how fast a host relative can be identified. There are two boys who have spent more than four years in *ingando*.

*Ingando*'s ultimate goal is the transformation and 'preparation' of the participants. These need to be 'recovered and updated.'<sup>100</sup> The administrator uses the term 'psycho-social support' though his elaboration of the term suggests it is not trauma counselling (the usual interpretation of the word) he is engaged in, but rather behavioural modification:

*[Psychosocial support] is a tool of behavioural change. When the child comes, it has some behaviours that really need to be eradicated [...] I approach the child, talk to it, and see how the child is answering, to see the extent of support that is required, that it requires this direction, orientation [...] I do it in a parental way. Depending on the way they are behaving, I bring them from one direction to another direction, I show the best way to cope with their lives, and then I continue to monitor how they are socialising with their fellows.'*<sup>101</sup>

*But how is that change achieved?* The camp administrator spent hours explaining the intricate system and multiple strategies he has created to assure control, which in turn assure monitoring, which in turn are a necessary tool both in measuring and achieving the desired change in participants. As a result, the Muhazi camp is in fact a perfect case study of the utilisation of separation, surveillance and indirect control in disciplining and 'transforming' participants.

First, control is assured through the elaborate information system of 'ears and eyes.' To learn about the behaviour of a particular participant 'I talk to those *already changed*, [asking them] what is he doing, they tell me [...] Then I call him in, he is surprised how I even knew [what he was doing]. But even if I am not here, there are so many eyes. That is one system' [emphasis added]. Another system is that of indirect control. It is in fact a political system of sorts, equipped with an executive and a judiciary. 'They have leadership amongst themselves. It is actually a very complicated system which I have developed.'<sup>102</sup> There is a leader — *duvaye* — 'something like a prefect, he is in charge of all the children in the camp. The prefect keeps changing so that everyone can get a chance to be a leader, get experience with managing his own behaviour and helping others.' Under the *duvaye* comes the disciplinarian, responsible for discipline of all, including the prefect 'so that the leader is not a dictator.' Under these posts, there is a person in charge of logistics and someone else in charge of sports. 'You see, it is like a cabinet.' Additionally, participants are divided into sectors (not military formations like in other *ingando*) and the camp daily responsibilities are divided among these groups (for example, sweeping).

Besides executive, there is also judiciary. 'I created *gacaca* [too]... it is better if they can do it [disciplining] themselves, to see the change, if we do it for them, we cannot really see the change. [...] The prefect or those responsible for discipline identify you and the mistakes that have been done, and report to the prefect. The prefect delegates [the case] to the chairman of the *gacaca*, the prosecutor and the judges. The *gacaca* will then call you, and will call everyone, because judgment is done in front of everyone.'<sup>103</sup> After thorough investigation and a private judgment by the chairmen and judges, the punishment is announced: 'You, Mr B, have done a mistake, for that you will be punished... sweeping the compound for five days, carrying five jerry cans of water. The

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<sup>100</sup> Interview with the Muhazi *ingando* coordinator, op.cit.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

case is closed... If, however, the accused says “I confess, I made a mistake, I will not repeat it again,” he gets [only] three days of sweeping because he confessed. This is to install unity, reconciliation.’<sup>104</sup> ‘It is a very complicated system...Everybody has an eye on his fellow, even the leader is looking [at] *gacaca*, *gacaca* is watching the leader, everyone is watching his fellow.’<sup>105</sup>

*How does all this connect to wider social dynamics in Rwanda? Ingando* are special social engineering spaces where the change of mentalities, behaviours and acquisition of knowledges and attitudes are the principal goals. In case of the Muhazi camp, *ingando* is also a miniature politico-social system with the important difference that the concentrated space of a total institution allows better surveillance and manipulation. The Muhazi camp system reflects wider Rwandan dynamics whereby social control is internalised in the social body (through surveillance and indirect control). Greater docility is assured by delegating ‘responsibilities’ in the system of indirect governance. Muhazi *ingando* is an example of administrative ‘divide and rule.’ In the end, it is the administrator who remains on the top of the complex structure of indirect rule. He approximates the figure of the absolute sovereign, a person above ‘law’/rules who has the final say, the power to change everything and who programmes his simulated social world to achieve his own objectives. This society outside society has been engineered by the quasi-sovereign and is being manipulated to achieve results — it is a social experiment *par excellence*.

Nkumba production: A convergent elite?

If the above sections focused on the camp as a condensed laboratory of social engineering, the present brief section focuses on effects and parallels of a different kind: on *ingando*’s learning style accentuating and producing convergence in knowledges and opinions. Though the focus lies on Nkumba and Gako *ingando* for university entrants, we have to bear in mind that the theme of ‘convergence’ pertains to all types of *ingando*. Nkumba participants are proclaimed as the ‘future leaders’ of the country, however, and so very relevant questions of the reproduction of power and an acquiescent elite arise.

A student recounts the exalted feeling after ending *ingando* at Gako military academy: “The ride to Kigali was nothing compared to the one to Gako. All the students were interacting and singing patriotic songs, even those on the streets were cheering and smiling at us [...] Our culture is the same, we all live on the same land, we speak the same language and we all hope for a better Rwanda, we are all *umoja* [one].” Some might indeed turn into true zealots after *ingando*. For others, the intense feelings they experienced gradually dissipate. The ‘apassionates,’ in any case, just as the ‘open critics,’ ‘dodgers’ or ‘leavers’ are a minority. Nonetheless, the fact remains that the majority of participant responses are homogeneous and are defined by a positive attitude and a lack of critique.

The politics of consensus requires a proper analysis. Leaving aside self-selection issues, the overall positive judgment and convergence in responses is structurally determined. On one hand, we have the dynamic of suppression (of voice and certain opinion), on the other, the dynamic of cooptation (into agreement). The result is that it is extremely hard to ‘quantify’ dissent. It is hard to know what was not said but is believed and what is said because of clear incentives (‘future leaders of the nation’) but otherwise would not be. At the same time, not all who do criticise automatically speak the ‘truth,’ while all those who agree might not be automatically ‘parroting propaganda’ (hiding away a ‘private’ reserve of contradictory opinion).

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<sup>104</sup> This plays off the wider Rwandan system of prisoner release upon their admission of guilt.

<sup>105</sup> Interview with the Muhazi *ingando* coordinator, op.cit.

The rather uniform spoken consensus, whether genuine or not, reflects a ‘success’ of *ingando*. As analysed above, *ingando* is not really *about* critical thinking but rather convergence in knowledges (on certain important issues, namely government policy) and attitudes/ behaviours (namely, patriotism and discipline). A minority evades *ingando*, another small minority never finishes it, and an unknown fraction has negative attitudes towards *ingando* or its aspects. Nonetheless, the unfailing ability to reproduce learned scripts and the homogenous response suggests again that a ‘unified citizen corps’ has been created, albeit perhaps only on the surface. While surface concord does not mean that the government is successful in creating lasting social harmony or agents that will sow long-term peace, it does manage to form a friendly social cohort that will take over economic and political power. Their understanding of and alignment with the government’s programme is thus crucial in power’s smooth reproduction. *Ingando* is meant to form the social segment – a *loyal elite* – that will not challenge structures but continue them.

In other words, why should responses *not* be overly positive if there are structural incentives for such behaviour? The students are told and believe they are the intelligentsia (separated from the ‘illiterates’) and future leadership of the country; they are made to see themselves among those who come to teach them (and it is government staff including high officials that come to the North to deliver their message). One does not bite the hand that feeds it (government scholarships) or will feed it (through future employment). Overall, the structural dynamics in contemporary Rwanda are such that greater alignment is a strategy of success (loyalty is rewarded) whereas non-alignment (of ‘dodgers’ ‘leavers’ and ‘objectors’ and open dissenters) is visible and stamps people with a question mark (in the important economy of ‘character assessment’ — a euphemism for finding non-contrary staffers).

Importantly, being co-opted and brainwashed are two distinct phenomena that should not be confused. ‘Brainwashed’ is a derogatory term laden with assumptions (of permanent enforced change, for example) and one that overlooks the reasons for and contexts of changed behaviour. In private or outside of Rwanda, even the youth ‘right hands of the government’ might speak differently. ‘In Rwanda just after the genocide, I worked for the government in Gikongoro area with youth, not just in *ingando*, also in communities as a trainer. I worked with youth persuading them about how good the RPF are.’ Part of the reason why my informant did this was ‘because it was a job. I saw that RPF had problems, I did not agree with it on everything, but neither did I agree with the other parties. I also did it because I wanted to know what they [youth] think and to teach them patriotism.’<sup>106</sup> There is a complex dynamic and numerous reasons underlying what we witness as cooptation. In politically tense and controlled settings, people’s motivations, perceptions and beliefs cannot be judged as unchanging and one-sided just because their public expression (in an unchanged regime) is.

Repeating the official discourse can be advantageous for the perpetrators as well. This is in fact another ‘tacit contract.’<sup>107</sup> Posing as ‘reformed’ is a way for released prisoners or ex-FAR/ex-FDLR to be accepted to a certain extent or at least not punished more. Behaving as a ‘reformed’ person can also have its rewards, for example, in the form of

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<sup>106</sup> Interview with a student (of Rwandan nationality) at Leipzig University, Germany, 20 April 2009.

<sup>107</sup> Why is this a ‘tacit’ rather than ‘overt’ contract? TIG, for example, is an overt trade-off, an official system of shortened ‘alternative’ sentencing if a perpetrator admits crime and goes through *gacaca*. But that the perpetrators would be ‘left alone’ or even ‘fare better’ if they follow the official line is an unspoken, ‘tacit’ contract.

jobs. 'Some of the released prisoners even become local leaders, for example in the defence forces, [or] they can become part of the *Njyanama* consultative committee.'<sup>108</sup>

In general, the government is creating a stratum of aligned and partly 'transformed' individuals. Different groups might be managed differently but the aim is always the smooth reproduction of current power alignments. Here we have focused on a specific segment – student *ingando* participants – and how they are 'formed,' 'reformed' influenced by and in turn influencing government and state dynamics. This was just a case study and we have to ask: what are the other mechanisms that either help hold the power together or tear it apart? A dynamic analysis means asking who is cooptable, coopted, aligned, at loggerheads with central power, and why this might be the case. Rather than focusing on 'naming' difference (for example, 'Ugandan returnees support the government'), this method helps produce a fluid and dynamic social differentiation (explaining the why, not the what, the latter of which is not only non-explanatory but also static and always just a (slightly imprecise) shorthand).

## 9 Collective rites of passage to a 'New Rwanda': Liminality and the reproduction of power

Besides producing 'concentrated' learning, *ingando* are meant to be catalysts of transformation. They are to act as places of transition and can be theorised as 'rites of passage.' The following analysis draws on three main theoretical approaches — Genep's (1960) concept of a rite of passage with three stages; Turner's (1969) analysis of rite of passage with special focus on liminality and 'communitas;' and finally, Hobsbawm and Ranger's (1983) concept of 'invented traditions' and their functionality in modern nation-states. Fundamentally, both Genep and Turner focus on rite of passage as 'tradition' in small 'face-to-face' societies (for example, Turner's focus on Ndembu installation rites). Their theories are nonetheless more widely applicable. As Genep (1960 xvii) himself mentions, "there is no evidence that a secularised urban world has lessened the need for ritualised expression of an individual's transition from one status to another." Hobsbawm and Ranger's brief exposé of 'invented traditions' might be more directly relevant to the dominant political ontology of the present day – the nation-state (a pervasive tradition indeed) – and shows how 'traditions' (including 'rites of passage') can be dynamic phenomena that can be introduced from above to serve socio-political purposes.

Rites of passage are a universal phenomenon. *Rites de passage* "accompany every change of place, state, social position and age" (Genep, in Turner 1966: 94). Societies across the world utilise them as "devices... to help with the new adjustment" (Genep 1960: xiii). Fundamentally, then, rites of passage are meant to help an individual (or a group) to cope with and accommodate profound change. In Rwanda, we can talk of a 'social crisis' or 'group crisis,' and hence of 'collective rites.' Genep himself refers to these in passing, calling them 'rites of intensification' (term by Chapple and Coon 1942; in Genep 1960:xii). The function of such ceremonies is the "restoration of moral sentiments... disturbed through changes in the social life of the group" (Radcliffe-Brown, in Genep 1909: xiii) or "restoration of equilibrium where changes in social interaction impended or had occurred" (Chapple and Coon, *ibid.*). A post-genocide society is a prime example of a profound need for restoration of social relations. It is not only necessary to

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<sup>108</sup> However, released perpetrators do fall under much greater scrutiny/surveillance in their jobs. Source: Interview at Hagaruka association, 20 January, 2009.

restore 'one' political community but also one moral community. Importantly, the existence of rites of passage says nothing about their actual 'effectiveness' as a restorative force: "[c]eremonialism alone cannot establish the new equilibrium, and perfunctory ritual may be pleasant but also meaningless" (Gennep 1960: xvii).

Rites of passage can be sub-divided into rites of separation ('preliminal rites'), rites of transition ('liminal rites') and rites of incorporation ('postliminal rites') (Gennep 1960: 10). As regards *ingando*, the very act of camping in an unfamiliar and far-away place is an act of separation. This is further strengthened by restricted movement out of the camp and lack of communication with the outside. The change of clothes or other 'temporary differentiation' (Gennep 1960: 74) also represent a rite of separation. Nkumba participants change into military uniform immediately upon their arrival. Street children undergo perhaps the most symbolic separation of all — their tattered clothes are gathered and burnt collectively in a bonfire. The new clothes they are given signify the children start anew, they signify the beginning of a new life.<sup>109</sup>

Separation rites such as these are meant to give way to the transformation that is to occur in the transitional state — 'liminality.' Liminality is induced through separation and encompasses all the time spent in the camp. Turner wrote of the fundamental 'ambiguousness' of the liminal period in which a person "passes through a realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or the coming state" (Turner 1969: 94). Though at one level this claim is apparently correct (the transient nature of camping; the hyperbole of equal treatment; etc.), as we have seen throughout the chapter, *ingando* is a state-organised rite that is permeated by and reflects wider social dynamics and power constellations, and is ultimately meant to serve grand social engineering purposes. In this sense, we need to critically approach the powerful metaphor of 'betwixt and between,' 'neither here nor there' (Turner 1969: 95) that so often describes 'liminality' and conditions such as 'refugeeness.'

Turner (1969) argues that liminality brings about a state of 'communitas' or equality of condition — a space where people are stripped of all social markers ('disquieters') and submitted to "authority that is nothing less than that of the total community," with cessation of "society as a structured, differentiated, and often hierarchical system of politico-legal-economic positions, with many types of evaluation, separating men in terms of "more" or "less" (Turner 1969: 96). While liminality might indeed bring physical and/or metaphorical displacement and the cessation of common or known 'rules' or 'ways' of life, and indeed a temporary state of 'uniform condition' (skilfully doubling as a nation-building tool in *ingando*), which includes sexlessness (for example, the same uniform is worn all), anonymity (for example, the demarcation according to military nomenclature; the group name for all initiates such as *kos*) and equal treatment, it by no means signifies a power-less and structure-less vacuum.

In *ingando*, rites of incorporation are not included though the camps as such are about transition, change and incorporating the citizen into their place in the new government-designed order. The only exception is *ingando* for university entrants where young people literally 'enact' coexistence by eating, sleeping, exercising and learning together. The end of *ingando* again involves a rite of separation — for example, a graduation ceremony and receipt of a diploma or certificate — which are meant both as i) a closure, an end to a stage; and ii) a way to hasten incorporation and identification with a new role or different status (the certificate is a 'proof' of 'graduation').

Using the 'territorial' imagination, in liminality, one 'wavers between two worlds' (Gennep 1960), one that initiates must forgo for another one. *Ingando* is meant as a

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<sup>109</sup> Discussion with one of the *ingando* administrators, Rwamagana, 16 March 2009.



‘threshold’ and to cross the threshold is an attempt to “unite [the initiate] with a new world” (Gennep 1960: 20). This can happen in a physical sphere (from outside to inside the country; from the prison ‘inside’ the New Rwanda) and/or a symbolic sphere (from one status or way of being to another). The transformation is not meant to result only through the content of what is being taught but also through contexts, the where and how of experience. In the space of liminality, participants are ‘out of their element’: they use different words and do unusual things. They are supposed to be reconstituted through this, to become someone else. In certain cases, participants are simply meant to become ‘someone’. In *ingando* for street children, the administrator points to the fidgety and buzzing gathering, saying “they were no one and now they can be someone.”<sup>110</sup>

As novel re-appropriations of the past in service of a present goal, *ingando* may also be likened to Hobsbawm and Ranger’s (1983: 1) ‘invented’ traditions (although the term re-invented is more appropriate) defined as a “set of practices... of a ritual or symbolic nature” seeking to “inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past... preferably a suitable historical past.” Invented traditions are divided among i) those establishing or symbolising social cohesion and collective identities; ii) those establishing or legitimising institutions and social hierarchies; and iii) those socialising people into particular social contexts (ibid: 9). *Ingando* in fact subsumes all three functions, seeking to achieve cohesion by ingrain a new collective identity, using in the process history as a ‘legitimator of action’ (ibid: 12), and attempting to socialise or ‘reintegrate’ various population segments. As a single act, however, *ingando* differs from traditions that inculcate values by repetition.

Although the creation of these ‘ritual and symbolic complexes’ has not been adequately studied, we know that inventions occur more frequently when “a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which ‘old’ traditions had been designed” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983: 4). Especially new political regimes “might seek to find their own equivalents for the traditional rites of passage,” some form of a stylised acknowledgement of or an impetus for the desired transformation of their subjects (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983: 10). Rwanda’s intensive ‘production of traditionality’ might be a reflection of the attempted departure from its immediate past, yet simultaneous anchoring of the present in the pre-colonial era, which might offer a sense of connection and thus a source of legitimacy.

As a re-invented ‘traditionality’ and thus ‘authenticised’ liminality, *ingando* harnesses official script reproduction and, ultimately, helps cement the cohesiveness of the current power arrangement. *Ingando* is also meant as a space of transition into the role of the ‘ideal citizen’ — overwhelmingly interpreted as person with obligations to rather than rightful demands on the state. In a post-genocide landscape of disruption and multiplicity, *ingando* has been indispensable to teach people what is expected of them in the ‘New Rwanda Order’ (allAfrica 14 September 2005).

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

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